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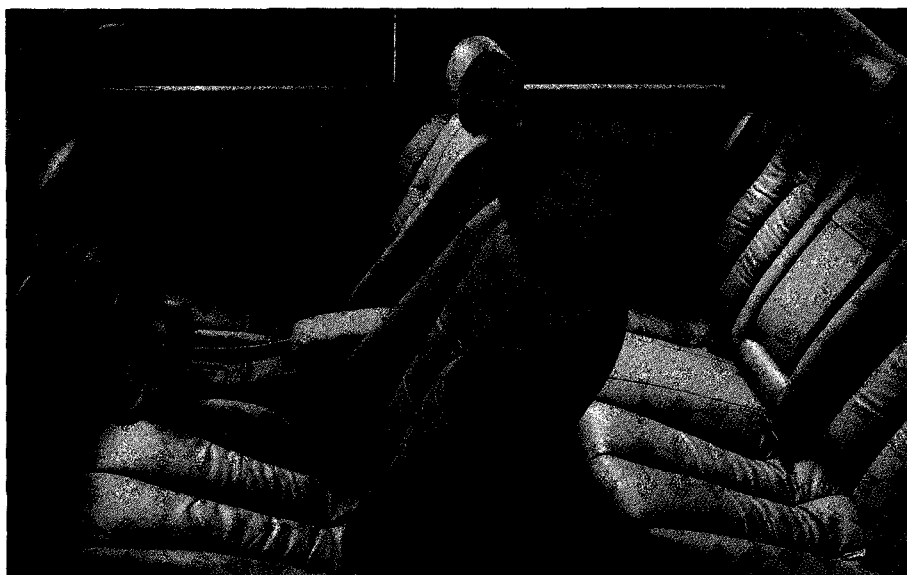
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

WE always thought of "Guys and Dolls" as universally familiar, one of those musicals that everyone not only had seen but had *been* in. So when we heard that there was going to be a revival of it on Broadway this coming spring, about the only response we could muster was a Kevin Costner-like "neat." We have long considered the stories of Damon Runyon, upon which the show is based, equally common property. Well, according to John Martello, whose one-man "Damon Runyon's Tales of Broadway" opens this week at the Double Image Theatre, it seems that we were wrong. "You wouldn't believe how many people under thirty have no idea who Runyon is," Mr. Martello told us recently. "They've never read his stories in school, never seen any of the movies based on his work." In other words, no "Little Miss Marker," no "Pocketful of Miracles," and, even though it has a cast featuring the presumably appealing Madonna and Matt Dillon, no "Bloodhounds of Broadway."

Mr. Martello has been performing his show around the country for a while now, and in the process he's become something of an authority on Runyon's world—a place in which gamblers and boxers and Broadway riffraff address each other in low-life argot. He wasn't always so knowledgeable. "Seven years ago, I was doing a show in south Jersey, and I was in this producer's office, where I saw a volume called 'Guys and Dolls' on the shelf. I just assumed it was the book of the musical; it turned out to be a collection of Runyon's short stories. I forgot about them, but when I got back to New York I walked into the Strand and one of the first things that hit me was another book of Runyon stories." He read them all in short order, and says he was struck by the way in which the stories, which are told by an unnamed narrator, lent themselves to adaptation for a solo actor. "I also like the fact that the stories have local settings, since I'm a New York chauvinist at heart." Mr. Martello's chauvinism may only increase: he became Double Image's artistic director late last year, so he'll be spending a lot less time on the road this season.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)
DAMON RUNYON'S TALES OF BROADWAY—A one-man show conceived and performed by John Martello. Preview on July 17. Opens July 18 at 8. (Double Image Theatre, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)
GEORGY—Meghan Duffy stars in a revival of the 1970 musical by George Fischeff (score), Carole Bayer-Sager (lyrics), and Tom Mankiewicz (book). Directed by Morgan LaVere. Also with Molly Elle Scott, Michael Oberlander, Joel Goodness, Jonathan Lutz, Bill Wheeler, Fredi Walker, and Tracy Darin. Previews July 16-17. Opens July 18 at 8, and runs through Aug. 9. (Wings, 154 Christopher St. 627-2961.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24			

OPENED RECENTLY

AND THE WORLD GOES 'ROUND: THE SONGS OF KANDER & EBB—A musical revue, with Joel Blum, Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Terry Burrell, and Karen Ziemba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)
BODY AND SOUL—David Boldt and Randall Denman have the leads in John Glines' gay romantic comedy. Mr. Glines also directed. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)
BREAKING LEGS—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia can seldom have been funnier than as a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Nicolas Surovy, and, above all, Sue Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)
CHARGE IT, PLEASE—A comedy by Carlos Gorbea. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes July 28.)
CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—The final play of the season is **THE BALCONY SCENE**, by Wil Calhoun. With Jonathan Hogan, Cynthia Nixon, and William Fichtner. The director was Michael Warren Powell. (99 Seventh Ave. S. 924-7100. Closes July 28.)
GETTING MARRIED—A production of Shaw's comedy, directed by Stephen Porter. The cast includes Victoria Tennant, Nicolas Coster, Simon Jones, and Madeleine Potter. (7/8/91) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)
GYPSY—The Tyne Daly-led revival of the great Laurents-Styne-Sondheim musical has returned to Broadway for a limited engagement. It is so delightful—and the cast so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). (12/4/89) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)
LIPS TOGETHER, TEETH APART—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Nathan Lane and Anthony Heald; directed by John Tillinger. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)
LOST IN YONKERS—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)
LOVE LEWMINGS—A satirical comedy revue by Joe DiPietro. With Steve Ahern, John Daggett, Helen Greenberg, and Kathryn Rossetter. Directed by Melia Bensussen. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)
LUSTING AFTER PIPINO'S WIFE—A comedy by Sam Henry Kass. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 564-8038.)
MAMBO MOUTH—John Leguizamo portrays seven Hispanic characters in a one-man show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)
MISS SAIGON—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)
MR. GOGOL AND MR. PREEN—Elaine May's play about the relationship between an aging New York writer (Mike Nussbaum) and a vacuum-cleaner salesman (William H. Macy) is sweet, funny, and poignant. It shows the two actors at their best and is rather like a road

movie, with Nussbaum and Macy as Bing and Bob, and Zohra Lampert as a sort of *mitteleuropäische* Dorothy Lamour. Instead of being about sex and show business, the jokes here are about philosophy, politics, and the problem of definitions. Starting July 23, Richard Council replaces Mr. Macy. (6/24/91) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes July 28.)

PAGEANT—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

PROM QUEENS UNCHAINED—A new musical by Larry Goodnight, Keith Herrmann, and Stephen Witkin. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

RED SCARE ON SUNSET—Charles Busch wrote and stars in this comedy about an actress battling Communism in nineteen-fifties Hollywood. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

A RENDEZVOUS WITH GOD—Avi Hoffman stars in Miriam Hoffman's play, with music, about the Yiddish poet Itzik Manger. Directed by Sue Lawless. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

THE SECRET GARDEN—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

SONG OF SINGAPORE—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

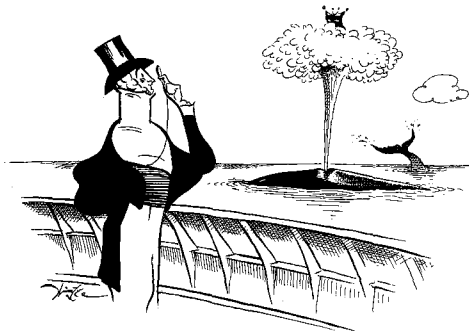
THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) ... **CITY OF ANGELS**: Larry Gelbart, dra-



Charles Busch and Julie Halston in "Red Scare on Sunset"



matist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)... **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.)... **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991 1/2:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)... **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)... **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.)... **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** A musical by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)... **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)... **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center, 239-6200.)... **THE SUM OF US:** David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Closes July 28.)

DANCE

If you are a young child with immortal longings to dance on a Broadway stage, chances are you study dancing at one of the schools associated with a big-time New York City company. If, however, you are a young child who longs to perform in the work of postmodern choreographers and performance artists at theatres and studios in Chelsea and points south, you are probably taking a class with Ellen Robbins at Dance Theatre Workshop. Over the past few years, her students have often appeared with Remy

Charlip, as well as with Tamar Rogoff, Melanie Slater, Wendy Perron, and Marta Renzi. The Limón Dance Company's recent revival of "Day on Earth" also took a pair of Ms. Robbins' students (one for each of two casts) for performances at New York's Joyce Theatre, as well as on tour to France and Yugoslavia.

We caught up with Ms. Robbins and her pupils recently at one of the annual year-end recital programs she produces at D.T.W. On this occasion, eleven of the twelve pieces were choreographed by the ten- or eleven-year-old dancers who performed them. (The last group piece was by Ms. Robbins.) The only similarities we could see among the numbers—apart from the fact that it was a program of solos and trios—were that every child seemed to be performing freely, as herself, and that every child had taken on the task of shaping a real construction called a dance. Since we rarely find both these elements conjoined in the adult performances we attend at D.T.W., we asked Ms. Robbins how she did it. She described an intensely monitored, yearlong process of improvisation, whose point is to give a child a sense of emotional control over the dance he or she performs. From that, Ms. Robbins believes, come initiative, curiosity, appreciation of artistic structure, and an appetite for responsibility. The goal is to educe from the children the sense—and the look—of spontaneity. "When I was a child, I used to dance around my living room," Ms. Robbins said. "To me, when the dance is not separate from the dancer but is the dancer herself, swimming in her own juices, that's real dancing."

IN TOWN

ROYAL BALLET—Final performances, July 15-17 at 8: "Swan Lake."... July 18-19 at 8 and July 20 at 2 and 8: "Manon." (Metropolitan Opera House, 362-6000.)

ERICK HAWKINS DANCE COMPANY—In "Hurrah!" "New Moon," and "Heyoka." (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. July 19 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

LAR LUBOVITCH DANCE COMPANY—See the listing under Mostly Mozart Festival in Music.

DANCES FOR WAVE HILL—Site-specific works presented by Risa Jaroslow, Deborah Gladstein, and John Jasperse. (Wave Hill, Independence Ave. at 249th St., the Bronx. July 20-21 at 4. No charge beyond admission to the grounds.)

OUT OF TOWN

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—July 16 at 8:15: "Chaconne," "La Valse," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto."... July 17 at 8:15: "Bugaku," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Western Symphony."... July 18 at 2: "Chaconne," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," and "Western Symphony."... July 18 at 8:15: "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," "La Valse," and "Dances at a Gathering."... July 19 at 8:15: "Apollo," "Ash," "Romeo and Juliet Pas de Deux," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue."... July 20 at 2: "Chaconne," "Eight Easy Pieces," "Eight More," and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue."... July 20 at 8:15: "Bugaku," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Western Symphony."... July 23 at 8:15: "Waltz Trilogy," "The Cage," "Four Gnossiennes," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto."... July 24 at 8:15: "Jewels." (Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs. 1-518 587-3330. Through July 27.)

JACOB'S PILLOW—Ballet Chicago, July 16-20... Garth Fagan Dance, July 23-27. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

WHO are these wolf packs of clubgoers wearing oversize plastic-nametag necklaces? They are, of course, participants in the Twelfth Annual New Music Seminar, which is currently under way (through July 17). In its infancy, the seminar was a gathering of music-industry dissidents, but by now it has become an epic schmoozarama embracing everything from the status quo to the razor's edge. (This year's event can almost be seen as a dry run for the upcoming Grammys, when the industry's high rollers come to town.) Every year, the seminar attracts more attendees (perhaps upward of eight thousand this time), and every year it welcomes more genres into its bosom. Some four hundred bands were selected to play this year. Pop, rock, metal, dance, international, psychedelic, thrash, noise, and combinations thereof are well represented; rap is somewhat self-consciously put on a pedestal; and "hip-hop," an emerging fusion of rap and jazz, makes its seminar debut.

Aside from the nightly spectacle of clubhopping (twenty-five venues open their doors to the badge-wearers), the New Music Seminar is largely about taking care of business: bands pushing their demos; independent labels pushing their tapes, CDs, and (how nostalgic!) records; equipment manufacturers pushing their latest products; and everyone pushing for a seat at the bar at the Marriott Marquis, where the seminar is based. As usual, there are speeches, awards, and panel discussions—for example, "Bind Me, Tie Me, Chain Me to the Wall: It's Heavy Metal." In short, it's a convention like any other, a time to put on funny hats, collect business cards, and drop water-filled condoms out of hotel windows. The bands come from across the country (and around the world), and run the gamut from little-knowns-with-funny-names (Poopshovel, Lubricated Goat) to breaking news like Fishbone, Material Issue, and King Missile. We can't cite any industry balance sheets, but this year's seminar would seem to indicate that new music is alive and well.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town... **Musicians** and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.) **ABILENE CAFÉ**, 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (255-7373)—A reincarnated blues bar: the first Abilene led a low-profile life in the East Twenties until 1987; this one opened last year. The club, which is spacious, cheerful, and as plain as a brown paper bag, won't win any prizes for atmosphere, but it has all the ingredients of a good blues bar: cheap grub, a modest cover charge, and a non-trendy crowd.

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Thirty-year-olds in love call Mabel Godwin "a scandal." Now in her seventies, she remains a singer of racy jazz numbers, a devout chatterer, a wearer of gold lamé suits, and a pianist who perks along quite nicely to the accompaniment of a snare and a standup bass. Ms. Godwin performs Fridays and Saturdays from nine-thirty. On Sundays, cornettist LEE LORENZ leads the Creole Cookin'

Jazz Band; on Mondays, the Grove Street Stompers do their Dixieland thing; and Tuesdays through Thursdays belong to Al Bundy. Arthur's is currently decorated for the holidays—Christmas, New Year's, Halloween, and St. Patrick's Day.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slightly decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. The **WISEGUYS** kick off a three-week stretch on July 16. The trio—two Texans and an Iowan—have been polishing their show around town recently, and have caught the eye of many cabaret notables. Some of their material is a cappella, some includes piano accompaniment; they write many of their own songs, including such irreverent numbers as "Just Too White"; and between-song patter plays a significant role. This engagement is the trio's Ballroom debut. Shows at nine and eleven-fifteen.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. The **MIKE LONGO** trio is at work here July 16-18. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists; it's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? The Argentine tenor-sax player **GATO BARBIERI** will be here July 16-21; the **JIM HALL/RON CARTER** duo begins a week's worth of shows on July 23. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. A few still-kicking golden oldies will be around this week: Jefferson Airplane/Starship's **PAUL KANTNER** on July 19-20; and **ELVIN BISHOP** ("Fooled Around and Fell In Love") on July 21. Charles Brown appears July 22-23, with Danny Caron, Keith Copeland, Earl May, and Clifford Solomon; and **MARTI JONES** and **DON DIXON** perform on July 24. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar where, if your neighbors cooperate, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. A trio consisting of pianist **KENNY BARRON**, bassist **PAUL WEST**, and drummer **BEN RILEY** is currently at work here; a trio led by pianist **GEOFF KEEZER** starts up on July 22. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times*. There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up and tune up. Music generally begins at about eighty-thirty.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club, a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti, is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia: new and used bands of every stripe continue to pass through nightly. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. Two piano virtuosos are on the schedule here: **ROLAND HANNA** and his quartet July 16-21, and **AHMAD JAMAL** beginning July 23. Music after nine.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Young, loud, and rude. N.Y.U. students like it here, as do punks, weekend punks, and anyone with a taste for rough-and-tumble garage-rock music. There's not a lot to look at—except the band and your fellow-patrons. A few highlights: **JULY 17**, **PHOEBE LÉGERE**; **July 19**, the **SURREAL MC COYS**; and **July 20**, the **WALDOS**. Shows Sundays

through Thursdays at ten, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar. The place brightens up considerably at ten, with an assortment of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A pleasant hangout for white-collar trash, where you'll find cold Dixie beer, collard greens, and plenty of men who know how to wear a leather vest. As if that weren't enough, the bar-and-restaurant also features a corrugated-tin ceiling and a truckload of sort-of-Southern items: a photo booth, a giant Amoco sign, an Evel Knievel lunchbox. Most nights, the buffet turns into a bandstand at nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

DIVA, 306 E. 81st St. (650-1928)—A newly hatched restaurant-and-piano bar. It's a modest-sized, brick-walled room that offers Italian fare and the musings of pianist **CHARLES DE FOREST** Tuesdays through Saturdays. De Forest is a songwriter in the Cole Porter tradition, and his work has been championed pretty emphatically of late by Tony Bennett. Music from eight-thirty. Closed Sundays.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St. (924-0275)—An Irish bar way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. The back room has Hibernian sounds on Fridays and acoustic guitarists on Saturdays. Sets at nine and eleven.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. Saxophonist **BENNY GOLSON**, who made his name in the mid-fifties with Dizzy Gillespie and whose style reflects Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster, will be performing here through July 21. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

GONZALEZ Y GONZALEZ, 625 Broadway, at Houston St. (473-8787)—Loud, brash, and big. The theme is Mexican, and you get the whole enchilada—a giant cactus here, a parade-float sombrero there, and chili-pepper clusters everywhere. The stage is in the rear, about a city block from the entrance. Music Wednesdays through Saturdays from ten.

GREENE STREET, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—This is such a gorgeous, thirties-ish movie set of a place that you expect gunmen to burst in at any moment. The restaurant-and-bar—forested and twilight—is about the size of a football field, with the piano at the fifty-yard line. If your seats are good enough, you'll hear some able entertainers, including **DAVE LEONHARDT** July 16-17, **PETE MALINVERNI** July 18-20 (with a bassist) and **July 22**, and **HAL SCHAEFER** beginning on July 23.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and **STEVE LA SPINA** are in action July 17-20; **JOHN BUNCH** and Mr. La Spina take charge on July 24. Music from about nine-forty-five.

LAUTERBACH'S BROOKLYN BEAT, 335 Prospect Ave., at Sixth Ave., Brooklyn. (1-718 788-9140)—It's an improbable bar in an unlikely location, but Lauterbach's has spawned a scene of sorts—and the owners have a wall of press clippings to prove it. In its short life as a rock venue (it has a longer one as a neighborhood bar—the kind of place where Archie

Bunker might feel at home), the club has become HQ for a tight little community of Brooklyn bands, a development that has apparently brought in enough money for the club's recent facelift. Still, it's not as though you need a tux to get in the door.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—Spiffed-up theatre patrons walk by this club's façade—a Silver Eagle bus, with tires you can kick—and scratch their heads. Inside, big bearded guys with cowboy hats rub elbows at the bar while newcomers study the Texas memorabilia and, upstairs, the display of vintage Gibson guitars. The dining room, where bands hold sway, features a Wright Brothers-era airplane suspended from the ceiling, a dance floor where you can kick up some dust, and a balcony for quiet types. July 16 belongs to **FRANKY STARR**, among others; and the **PALADINS** appear on July 18. Music after nine. Dining.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—This blues house is a bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight-thirty.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club, just off the West Side Highway, that is one of the city's main venues for college-radio fare. There's an all-Irish bill here on July 16, which includes the wry **FATIMA MANSIONS**, who penned the single "Blues for Ceausescu." The latest splash from England—**NED'S ATOMIC DUSTBIN**, from Stourbridge (home of the Happy Mondays, among others)—can

be heard here on July 17. The group, who thrash and bray without losing sight of melody, and whose debut album is just coming out, have drummed up a Dead-like following at home. Their faithful even have a nickname—"crusties," a term that allegedly refers to the state of their clothing after a few weeks of trailing their idols hither and yon. Other news:

SELECTOR on July **DIFFORD & TILBROOK**

19, and Squeeze's brain trust on July 20.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—There's more to Michael's Pub than Woody Allen, whose occasional Monday-night Dixieland binges have given the place a little star cachet. Non-filmmakers can usually be found onstage here the rest of the week, in a main dining room that strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like a good old American family restaurant. Still, there's a real nice red telephone booth when you walk in the door. Pianist **TERRY WALDO** is currently leading an ensemble, in a show tantalizingly titled "Sporting House Revelries: An Authentic Look at the Bordello Music of New Orleans." Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moon dust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a lot. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking, "Is the water too warm?" Vocalist **PHYLLIS NEWMAN** continues through July 20. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Last fall, after a long slumber, the Tea Room's small, red-gold-and-green cabaret reopened with a series of performances. Singer **JEFF HARNAR**, who'll be here on July 23, offering an evening of American drink and song, will sing one number with a quiet, gentle lilt, then drop his voice down low and belt out



The Wiseguys, at the Ballroom

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

the next with a vibrato that could shake a diploma off a wall. His performances usually include just the right number of bad jokes and over-the-top theatrics, as well as some nice musical surprises. This show focusses on songs by Gershwin. Dinner is served at seven, and the music at nine.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This former luncheonette has a tropical motif—straw huts, bamboo, a fake palm tree, a mosaic of gourds—and one of the city's more international booking policies: Brazil, Africa, and the Caribbean are just a few of the places explored. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. Flugelhornist **ART FARMER'S** quintet is in swing July 16-21; **DON PULLEN'S** trio begins work on July 23. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter Miles Evans, is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that has become an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is slicker and roomier than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. On July 15, R.E.M. singer **MICHAEL STIPE** will host an evening called "Deep South in N.Y.C." The program will consist of four unsigned bands whose demo tapes Stipe produced recently—**BEGGAR WEEDS**, from Jacksonville, Florida; and **DAISY, SWELL DOPA**, and the **OPAL FOXX** quartet, all from Georgia. **PERE UBU**, the influential, often eerie, Cleveland-spawned band, who helped to usher in the noise-rock era, comes in on July 17, along with **MIRACLE LEGION** and others. The trio of Marcia Ball, Lou Ann Barton, and Angela Strehli performs on July 19, with the Iguanas opening. Blues guitarist **BOBBY RADCLIFFE** claims July 20, also with the Iguanas.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, Mondays after nine are set aside for salsa bands. July 22 belongs to **LOS HERMANOS MORENO**, **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN**, and the **JOHNNY RAY** orchestra (the last being a salsa group founded by Johnny Zamont and Ray Sepulveda, having no connection to the late balladeer Johnnie Ray).

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia. The **RALPH MOORE** quintet is in session through July 21; the fine young pianist **GERI ALLEN** leads a trio as of July 23. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**. Music after nine-thirty.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Reggae's self-styled Cinderella, **SISTER CAROL**, comes in on July 22. Also appearing this week are the Spin Doctors (July 19), Solar Circus (July 20), Blue Dixie (July 23), and the Medicine Men (July 24). Music at ten.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Pianist **JANE JARVIS** will be playing in duos for the next few weeks. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

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TRIBUTE



The most important thing about the new Korean War Memorial, in Battery Park near the Statue of Liberty ferry terminal, is the part that isn't there: a chunky soldier shape cut out of a twenty-foot-high black Pennsylvania-granite obelisk and lined with stainless steel. According to the monument's designer, the artist Mac Adams, the shape is meant to represent the "extraordinary space people leave behind." When the sun reflects off the steel, its texture seems to change constantly and the cutout casts shifting shadows on the ground below. Adams says that once a year, at the exact hour when the war's armistice was signed (10 A.M. on July 26), the cutout will cast a flamelike shadow. When a viewer facing uptown looks through the hole, the soldier encompasses a section of the old U.S. Shipping Line Building and the tower on the former Standard Oil Building; if the viewer is looking through the hole out toward the harbor, the soldier seems to be part tree and part Statue of Liberty. The monument, which was paid for by the New York Korean War Veterans Memorial Commission, weighs a hundred tons. Its base is circled with mosaics of the flags of the twenty-two nations that participated in the conflict on the U.N. side. The obelisk sits on a pie of twenty-two wedges of gray Vermont granite listing the numbers of those countries' casualties. Adams says that working on a memorial (this was his first) was like being a Renaissance artist—art making as a kind of job. "I enjoyed the clarity of the process," he adds. "No one is going to take this to Sotheby's and try to sell it."

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

NO fireworks shimmered down from the star-sapphired sky onto the barefoot, shirtless throngs converging on Fire Island Pines over the Fourth. Nor, in contrast to the jitneyed-and-Learjetted-to beach towns to the east, were there many glimmering stars from the cinema firmament on this stretch of sandbar—despite Suzy's annual coy reportage of a Pines boardwalk teeming with the likes of Meryl Streep, Dr. Ruth, Arlene Francis, Carol Channing, Leslie Uggams, Claudette Colbert, and Ann Reinking, mentions that had dune regulars slapping themselves silly.

But fling no leftover glitter in the direction of this shoreline, for Fire Island's seasonal beachcombers hardly

wanted for firepower. First of all, most of them had had their pyrotechnic ooh-and-ah fix a week earlier than the rest of America, on the Christopher Street pier during the climax of Lesbian and Gay Pride Day. Furthermore, had Auntie Mame asked the beachgoers the same thing she had asked the Upsons—"Are we all lit?"—she would have been blinded by the light, for the most crowded of holiday weekends here in the last five years saw a contingent of frequent fliers swooping down on one celebration after another with a force that could have scared the locusts from Pharaoh's grainfields.

There was a red party on the night of the Fourth. The attendees were suntans. A California beach party on the day of the fifth. Those guys got blasted and spoke in monosyllables. An Obsession party (named for a scent created by the original owner of the house) on the night of the fifth where the most pressing task was finding anything to drink, even water. Next up was a blue party. Several skin tones fit the dress code. A pink party hurried sundown on the sixth. Seven hundred souls went as happily flush as the punch, and turned upside down the edict proclaimed by handbills posted on the boardwalk: "A house is not a disco." A white party was held later that night, though fewer and fewer people had any of that color left in their eyes. A pool party brought the seventh to a close. This time no one went near the water, unless you were counting the ice. Everybody sparkled as one, glowed as one, gleamed as one, exploded as one, then crashed and burned together—in honor of Independence Day. "Did I get any color this weekend?" one of the revellers asked a friend, on the boat going home. "Lots," the friend assured him. But he never got more specific.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY— PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

SERIOUS FUN!—July 16: Dancenoise, the performance duo, in "It's a Girl"; and "B-4-Sin," by Johanna Went. . . . July 17: Frank Olivier, a juggler; Keith Terry, a dancer and percussionist; and Leonard Pitt, a solo performer. . . . July 18: "Medea," a solo dance-theatre piece by Ann Papoulis. The curtain-raiser is a short piece by Watchface. . . . July 19: Blue Man Group, three bald-headed blue guys, in "A Tribute to Alice Tully." The curtain-raiser is a performance by Harry Kipper. . . . July 20: A. Zoyd, a French art-rock ensemble, provides accompaniment to F.W. Murnau's 1922 silent film, "Nosferatu." . . . July 23: Rachel Rosenthal, a performer from Los Angeles, in "Pangaean Dreams." . . . July 24-25: Reno, the one and only. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Evenings at 8. Through Aug. 3.)

RENO—In warmup performances for her "Serious Fun!" gig. (Dixon Place, 37 E. 1st St. 673-6752. July 15-17 and July 22-23 at 9.)

DEB MARGOLIN—In a reprise of "970-DEBB," in which the performance artist dances around like Madonna. (Interart Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 246-1050. July 17, July 19, July 21, and July 24, all at 8. Through July 28.)

DUMB TYPE—A performance group from Japan, in "p.H." (Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, Cadman Plaza West and Old Front St., Brooklyn. July 17-20 at 8. For information about tickets, call 619-1955.)

ART

AD REINHARDT's single-color abstractions from the late fifties and sixties are often considered to be the Nordic lodestars of minimalism. With its current Reinhardt retrospective, the Museum of Modern Art, for one, has certainly built a powerful case for such a judgment and, in its inimitable way, has tried to bring the gavel down on that view as well. It is a very intense and occasionally eerie exhibition. Its concluding sequence, for instance, is a bright room filled with twenty of the artist's black-on-black paintings, arranged in a rhythmically stentorian fashion in which luminous nuances—Reinhardt's infinitesimal gradations of tone and his latent imagery, most notably the nearly ubiquitous cruciforms—have been all but obliterated. One is reminded instead of certain Carl Andre installations. The impact of the "black room" is terrifically jolting, like a door slammed shut or a gunshot fired in the concluding scene of a play.

In a strange way it is also anticlimactic. Before getting to this last, black room, viewers have slid through a sort of Wonderland rabbit chute of rooms in which colors first appear in natural abundance, then are gradually distilled, and finally are apotheosized into firmaments of blue, then red. In terms of pure, retinal drama, the high point of the show occurs during the transition from earth to Heaven, as it were, in a room given to half-tones and seemingly disembodied clarion notes against taupe, mauve, and puce-colored grounds, and in the segue from this room into one that is very suddenly, very astrally blue. It is a breathtaking moment, both disorienting and exhilarating. Visually, if not polemically, the hot spot of the show is right there.

In the antechamber to this exhibition are a few of Reinhardt's comic strips from the forties and early fifties, with their Katzenjammerish period style. Their rather insistent humor and utterly quixotic sense of mission—generally, to teach citizens "How to Look at Modern Art in America"—might seem to be antithetical to the brooding majesty of the artist's famous late paintings, especially, perhaps, to the despairing black ones. But they make sense in tandem. Seen together, Reinhardt's cheery, brittle how-to's and his quasi-religious voids play music fit for Godot: comic chattering and nattering, followed by big, weird, plangent fugues into a no-moon night.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A hundred and fifty sculptures, drawings, and decorative objects by Paul Manship (1885-1966). Through Sept. 1. . . . ¶ "The Sculpture of Indonesia," which includes much material on display outside its native land for the first time, exposes us to the fascinating, if only partially knowable, world of Hindu and Buddhist sculpture. The show begins with a few magnificent Bronze Age works—such as a massive ceremonial tablet and axe with fanciful shapes and crisp geometric details in shallow relief—that are included

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ART—Cont'd

just to indicate that ceremonial object-making did not begin with the arrival of the Indian deities. Many of these prehistoric pieces bear a strong resemblance to contemporaneous ones from China and what is now Vietnam; it is virtually impossible to distinguish a number of the Hindu and Buddhist works here from their Indian antecedents. But when an Indonesian sculptural identity emerges, it is hard to surpass. A stone sculpture of Prajnaparamita, the goddess of transcendental wisdom, is considered perhaps Indonesia's most important sculpture, and it is indeed the embodiment of grace. It was carved around 1300, in East Java, at the same time and in the same place as a very different statue of Bhairava, a fierce and demonic four-armed deity who wears a necklace of small severed heads, sits on a jackal, and rests his feet on a mound of human skulls. There are many other contrasts in the exhibition, and numerous sculptural wonders, including one of the five hundred and four seated Buddhas from Borobudur, the largest Buddhist temple in the world. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ If you need a break from the blockbusters, or the line for the restaurant is too long, you might wander through the Islamic galleries to "The Perfect Page," a small, glorious display of a few dozen illuminated manuscripts from the museum's extensive collection of Persian, Ottoman, and Indian works from the fourteenth century through the nineteenth. As one might expect, there are remarkably detailed volumes of the Koran, with their fanciful Arabic script, and there is also an amazing Ottoman calendar in the form of a scroll, which indicates not simply the date but also the aspects of



Gilberto Zorio

the sun, the phases of the moon, and the times of prayer in the various seasons. Also included is an exquisite sultan's cipher, similar to the one included in the museum's recent Süleyman the Magnificent extravaganza; this piece must be history's first decorative whiplash shape, anticipating the very modern Art Nouveau lines that followed much later. Through Aug. 18. . . . ¶ Walter Annenberg, who made a name for himself as the publisher of *TV Guide*, turned down a billion-dollar offer for his modern-art collection and chose instead the nobler path of philanthropy by bequeathing it to this museum several months ago. The gift of the collection, which had been perhaps the finest grouping of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings still in private hands, sets a standard of excellence for future patrons of the arts. The show begins with some exquisite small works by Fantin-Latour, followed by two rooms, devoted to Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, that would be the pride of any museum. These rooms include some of the collection's finest works, such as Monet's "Poppy Field, Argenteuil" (1875), Gauguin's "The Siesta" (1892-94), and Cézanne's "The House with the Cracked Walls" (1892-94), all of which were purchased by Annenberg in 1983 from his sister Enid Haupt. Farther on are some very good early-twentieth-century works, including Picasso's haunting "At the Lapin Agile" (1905), an important but somewhat overwrought Vuillard, a beautiful Matisse, and a

very pretty Bonnard; these works, however, are not up to the same level as the great Impressionist ones. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—Ninety-five paintings, collages, and gouaches by Ad Reinhardt. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ A small but pleasurable edifying show of drawings and models by the landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. A Brazilian who works mainly in his own country, Burle Marx is an uncompromisingly modern gardener who sculpts and paints with nature in broad, mid-century rhythms and bold strokes. If his emphasis on rubber plants sometimes harks back to all those progressive corporate lobbies of the fifties, his most panoramic vistas still have the big, beautiful look of Tomorrow. Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ "Seven Master Printmakers: Innovations in the Eighties." A respectable yet somewhat anachronistic exhibition, loaded with nostalgia for the days when an artistic canon was firmly in place. It is the curator's contention that all the artists in the show, who rose to prominence in the sixties, continued to be innovators in the eighties. Of all the artists shown, Jasper Johns has remained the most engaged in the process of printmaking. Be they etchings, lithographs, or monotypes, Johns' works are exquisite records of gesture. The selection of his prints here forms a thoughtful counterpoint to the retrospective of his drawings mounted recently at the Whitney. As for David Hockney and Jim Dine, they have produced little of historical interest in the eighties, and nowhere is this more evident than in their prints. There is a lot of experimentation in Frank Stella's prints from the decade, but of a sort that perhaps only a technician could love. James Rosenquist entered some risky territory with his eighties prints, and the payoff was great, at times perhaps even greater than in his paintings. Roy Lichtenstein is an undeniable master of the medium, but the selection here is unsatisfying. Robert Rauschenberg is a master, too, and shown here are the kinds of collaged images he does best, but their technique is virtually indistinguishable from what he was doing twenty-five years ago. All this leads us to the question, *What were the innovations of the eighties?* Through Aug. 13. . . . ¶ A video installation by Thierry Kuntzel is the latest work in the "Projects" series. Through Sept. 2. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10, with musicians from the Juilliard School performing at 7:30. This summer's program is dedicated to the music of Erik Satie. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—"American Life in American Art," a show of approximately a hundred and seventy twentieth-century paintings and sculptures from the museum's permanent collection. . . . ¶ Forty-five sculptures, drawings, and various objects made by Hunt Diederich (1884-1953). Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—Chris Burden's installation "Medusa's Head" is a five-ton hanging sphere composed of stone and toy trains. Through Sept. 2. . . . ¶ "Quattrocento: Early Italian Panel Paintings." . . . ¶ Forty works of art from Oceania, including three-inch-long fishhooks, three monumental carved-wood "guardians," and a skull rack made of palm, raffia, and bamboo. Through Sept. 16. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS, 1040 Grand Concourse—"The Nearest Edge of the World," an exhibition of works in several mediums by nine contemporary artists from Cuba.

Through Aug. 4. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Painting a Place in America: Jewish Artists in New York, 1900-45." Jewish painters and sculptors have certainly made contributions to the history of twentieth-century American art, but this is a weak idea for an exhibition, and no great historical insight is gained by the segregation. The organizers attempt to give purpose to their presentation by structuring the material around several educational and trade groups that fostered Jewish learning and identity. What the viewer is left with, however, is primarily an impression of second-rate, labored art—the essentially boring heaviness of urban social realism, as typified by the Soyfer brothers and provincial abstraction. But there are some delightful discoveries in the show—works by artists who would likely be overlooked by other art histories. They include a Cubistic 1915 portrait of Marsden Hartley, both witty and gripping, by Ben Bunn, and a mythical, Old World circus scene by Benjamin Kopman, with shades of Chagall, Ensor, and Marc. The issue of Jewish identity in modern American art gets interesting at the point where the exhibition ends, with the work of Newman, Rothko, and Gottlieb. The influence of Jewish mysticism on this trio's new art of spirituality is barely given a nod. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"Mozart: Prodigy of Nature." A comprehensive exhibition of all things Mozart. The show includes more than fifty manuscripts, from four pieces composed at age five to a first draft of the Requiem; early letters home from Italy (December, 1769) and his last letter to his father (April, 1787); and his "Verzeichnüss aller meiner Werke" ("Catalogue of All My Works"), which he kept for the last seven years of his life. Through Aug. 4. . . . ¶ Eighteenth-century drawings, from the library's collection, by the Venetian masters Tiepolo, Guardi, and Canaletto. Through Aug. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEO DEL BARRIO, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St.—The "Nuyorican" experience is alive in the work of Pepón Osorio, who moved to New York from Puerto Rico in 1975. At the entrance to this retrospective of his work is a fancy, fake-Venetian chandelier further ornamented by a trove of tacky tchotchkes, ranging from dominoes and water pistols to plastic ferns and tiny, brittle street-stand dolls. Other lightly nostalgic and comic charmers—some the results of performance collaborations with Merián Soto, the artist's choreographer wife—include "La Cama," a room-size work, with bed and coverlet, dedicated to the artist's nanny, and "Broken Hearts," a set piece, featuring luggage, about the dashed dreams of immigrants from the south. "The Wake," a life-size replica of a funeral parlor full of coffins and body bags, is a harrowing depiction of AIDS, both solemn and almost grotesquely disorienting in a museum setting. Through Aug. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Paint, Powder, and Leaf" showcases nearly a hundred decorated objects, from tin coffeepots and canisters to wood chests and iron fire screens. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ A show of twenty-four quilts with floral themes, all prize-winners from this spring's Great American Quilt Festival. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Forty-five narrative paintings by Harry Lieberman (1880-1983). Through Sept. 22. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—In the exhibition "Illustrating Nature: The Art of Botany," the New York Botanical Garden's collection is represented by ninety-five watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings, books, and dried plant specimens. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

THE NEW MUSEUM, 583 Broadway—"Africa Explores: Twentieth-Century African Art" presents more than a hundred art works in various mediums. The works are divided into five categories: "Traditional," "New Functional," "Urban," "International," and "Extinct." The Center for African Art has organized the exhibition, which runs simultaneously in its galleries, at 54 E. 68th St.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Metropolitan Museum has assembled a personal and engaging summer photography exhibition from its permanent collection. Although the written material that accompanies the show emphasizes the use of color and the issue of truth as the threads that connect the works on view, these pieces actually have something more interesting in common—a modern psychological consciousness. All five of the photographers represented work in very different ways: Andrew Bush captures someone driving in a car, isolated and deep in a private world, while René Sultre uses the metaphor of a brick wall to create a visualization of his father's death. Larry Sultan also delves into his family (and its dynamics), with his stills of old home movies and recent portraits of his parents. Philip-Lorca diCorcia's photos are strong in their suggestions of loneliness and alienation. And from Sally Mann there are gracefully complex photographs of kids hanging around. These five visions make for a show rich in both narrative implications and textures of feeling.



"Pools," at Helander and Levy

BRIAN WEIL / PAUL ICKOVIC—Photographs the artist has made in response to the AIDS epidemic. Weil is not only serious and well intentioned but also highly conscious of the complexities of his subject and its representation. His work is particularly revealing because he takes portraits of individuals, not of a "disease"; he may show us ways in which AIDS affects people's lives, but he isn't satisfied with producing mere visual or social clichés. / "Safe Conduct," a show of photographs documenting the recent political and social upheaval in Czechoslovakia. Both shows through July 21. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

GROUP SHOW—A diverse and absorbing group of pictures compiled with children in mind. There are terrific Weegees; several Lartigues, charming as always; a hysterical Doisneau on the theme of boredom in school; and many other works of well-known photographers. There are cloud pictures, moon pictures, and "puzzle pictures," and images that make you wonder how they were done, such as a shot by John Loengard of a miniature village in which a real cat dwarfs the minuscule inhabitants. If only more exhibitions for adults were this engaging! Through July 31. (Danziger, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

SHORT LIST—**NIC NICOSIA** and **BETTINA RHEIMS**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (through Aug. 30); **NINA HOWELL STARR** and **MICHAEL VON GRAFFENRIED**, Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Aug. 23).

(Open daily, except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.) Through Aug. 18. . . . In a show called "Embodying Faith," five contemporary artists tackle the theme of the relationship between the physical and the spiritual in Christianity. Through Aug. 18. . . . In the museum's Broadway windows is an installation by the Catalan artist Perejaume, titled "Pintura i Representació," that consists of two rows of visitor-accessible theatre seats. Through Aug. 18. . . . "Eclipse of the Earth," an installation by Kazuo Katase. Through Aug. 18. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"The Taste of Andrew Carnegie." The Scottish-born steel industrialist seemed to understand the difference between taste and historical judgment. His taste tended toward brooding Victoriana—sentimental peasant scenes and uninspiringly picturesque landscapes—but when it came to his legacy he trusted the experts and displayed a faith in public institutions that was unparalleled. By the time he died, in 1919, he had given away ninety per cent of his fortune to fund universities, concert halls (including New York's Carnegie), Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute, and more than twenty-five hundred libraries. This small show includes some of Carnegie's mediocre personal collection as well as selections from a fine print collection, including examples by Dürer and Goltzius, from the Carnegie Institute. The most enjoyable part of the show is the memorabilia, such as a menu from a dinner in Carnegie's honor that describes the "Bieffe" course as "Wut's Good's all Scotch, all that isn't ain't." Through Aug. 4. . . . Sixty drawings, photographs, and prints of New York structures built at the turn of the century by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White. Through Aug. 18. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Kingdoms of Land, Sea, and Sky" includes a hundred and eighty zoological woodcuts, engravings, and watercolors by artists and naturalists such as Albrecht Dürer, John James Audubon, Edward Lear, and Maria Sibylla Merian. Through Aug. 24. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.) . . . A display of recently acquired rare books and manuscripts, including Joseph Conrad's manuscript for "The Secret Sharer" and Washington Irving's for "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." (Berg Collection. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM, 144 W. 125th St.—A retrospective of works by Romare Bearden (1912-88), which includes more than a hundred oils, collages, and watercolors. Through Aug. 11. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

"PORTRAITS ON PAPER"—This selection of forty works in several mediums is an interesting counterpoint to the portrait show that Chuck Close, who is represented here, recently assembled at the Museum of Modern Art. Unlike Close's show, in which the portraits were racked and stacked on every available surface, this one gives ample space to each work. A tilt of the head, a reticent eye, a pair of pouting lips—these are the revealing details, as seen in such works as a Samaras pastel, a Clemente watercolor, and an early Warhol photo-booth self-portrait. There are some provocative juxtapositions. At the entrance to the show is a Gilbert and George photo work of a taxi-driver flanked by the voyeuristic, somewhat predatory portrayals, who are positioned as if they were patron saints in a Flemish altarpiece; opposite this, in a neat act of symmetry, are photographic portraits of the British duo by the New York duo McDermott and McGough. Elsewhere, there is a fascinating study in frontality in the unlikely linking of Basquiat, Dubuffet, and Condo. Robert Mapplethorpe's portrait of Roy Cohn's shiny, scarred face against a black ground looks like a depiction of the Devil himself. Even more haunting is a Cindy Sherman self-portrait, taken in 1975, when the artist was a college junior: it shows her as a little girl who might well have

stepped out of a Walker Evans photograph. This is social realism kissed by a subtle sarcasm, and it prefigures the tone much of her generation went on to convey. Through Aug. 2. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

SHORT LIST—**DAN CHRISTENSEN**, Drake, 50 W. 57th St. (through Aug. 16); **BERNARDA BRYSON SHAHH**, Midtown-Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through July 26).

GALLERIES—SoHo

TIMUR NOVIKOV—Unlike much of the Soviet art that has reached New York, Novikov's narrative paintings are the product of a light touch. All the works in this show consist of two contrasting pieces of fabric sewn together along horizon lines of various sorts; small painted elements added to the fabric set the narratives in motion. Through July 31. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

GILBERTO ZORIO—This Arte Povera artist is half mystic, half trickster. In the main gallery is a kayak-shaped piece with long copper rods and a flask filled with a copper-sulfide composition. The work is suspended from metal supports that aggressively stab the walls like javelins; it delineates its space with the theatrical grace of baroque architecture. There are also two metal star shapes, with similar supports. At regular intervals, a timer goes off and the sculptures start shaking, and loud scraping, whistling sounds pierce the space with the urgency of a Richard Foreman production. Upstairs, there are several fine drawings and a beautifully attenuated Dionysian bong. Its flask is filled with vodka, which a tall person could drink by sucking on the suspended end of a copper tube. Through July 27. (SteinGladstone, 99 Wooster St.)

"POOLS"—Truly a summer group show, of works in all mediums. Artists include Hockney, Leibovitz, Clemente, Bartlett, Meyerowitz, and Rivers. Through July 31. (Helander and Levy, 415 West Broadway. Both closed Mondays, open Saturdays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At **GORNEY**, 100 Greene St.: This exhibition takes a familiar theme—the loss of the original—and presents it afresh with various kinds of art. The London-based artist Michael Landy has literally brought the marketplace into the gallery and presented it as a relic: his two antique stall carts, spiffed up with a fresh paint job, are the show's most physically dominant works. Nearby are two elegiac paintings by Peter Nagy—in his distinctive, computer-esque black-and-white—of himself lurking in the shadows of the ruined cities of Persepolis and Nalanda. Nagy's works are surprisingly personal, given the impersonality of the technique, and are among his best to date. Christian Marclay, who has been shown too often lately, is represented by some good work—album covers with abstract images, mostly from the fifties and sixties, that the artist has painted over to make abstract paintings. Steve Wolfe's exquisitely detailed trompe-l'oeil books, which are made of painted wood and include a necessarily unreadable sculpture of Baudelaire's "Flowers of Evil," are good group-show fare, while Andreas Schön's realistic but also exceedingly abstract painting of a field is a teaser begging for a solo show. Through July 26. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **SONNABEND**, 420 West Broadway: Recent works by three very different artists from this gallery. Ashley Bickerton is trying very hard, but his new piece—an incense-burning shrine dealing with labor, immigration, and survival—doesn't work. Terry Winters' new paintings on paper of skeletal body parts seem deliberately less sensual than usual, and somewhat more interesting. Gilberto Zorio is represented by two eccentrically visionary sculptures of the sort he currently has on view at SteinGladstone. Through July 26. (Closed Mondays.)

SHORT LIST—**GARY BROTMAYER**, Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (closed Mondays, through July 31); **CARI ROSMARIN**, Kelly, 591 Broadway (through Aug. 2); **DAVID WEINRIB**, Steinbaum, 132 Greene St. (closed Mondays, open Saturdays, through July 20).



Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg,
at Mostly Mozart

MUSIC

IN this peculiar and fertile period of minimalism, new accessibility, crossover, and eclecticism in composition, we're surprised we don't hear more than we do about Carl Orff as a prophetic figure. "Carmina Burana," his orgiastic cantata on medieval (mostly Latin) lyrics, has been popular since its introduction, in 1937; no season goes by without a major-orchestra performance of the piece somewhere, and, despite the relatively limited scope for interpretation that it offers, new recordings by star conductors appear regularly.

Perhaps it has occurred to many that Orff prepared our current path with his blatant triadic harmony, hypnotic repetitions spiced with irregularity, sensuousness embodied in primitive percussion, and eschewal of counterpoint and development. Perhaps he is still seen, as he was by most critics of a few decades ago, as an isolated original. Some of those critics, if they wrote of Orff at all, made observations to the effect that "Carmina Burana" was in questionable taste. We have sometimes felt a little sheepish about enjoying it. The baritone soloist with his ecstatic falsetto in one solo and primitive-Verdian bravura in another, the delicately erotic soprano songs, the campy high-tenor solo for the roasting swan ("Dentes frendentes video," he says as he squawks his last)—there is something perhaps a bit teen-aged about all this fun. The choruses are pure hedonism. They are fun to hear but probably more fun to sing; that is why the "Carmina Burana" that interests us this summer is the audience-sing-along version, with Penna Rose on the podium, to be held by the New York Choral Society on July 16, at CAMI Hall (165 West 57th Street, at 7:30). To get the full effect of Orff, we think, you have to be in the middle of it.

IN TOWN—OPERA

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—TURANDOT, with Ealynn Voss, Edith Davis, Thomas Booth, and Wilbur Pauley; conducted by Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (July 17 and July 23 at 8, and July 20 at 2.)... LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES, with Joan Gibbons, Michael Rees Davis, Jeffrey Kneebone, and Kevin Short; Mark Gibson. (July 18 at 8 and July 21 at 2.)... A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, with Sally Ann Howes, Elaine Bonazzi, Beverly Lambert, Maureen Moore, Joanna Glushak, George Lee Andrews, Kevin Anderson, and Michael Maguire; Paul Gemignani. (July 19 at 8.)... TOSCA, with Martha Thigpen, Antonio Barasorda, and Harry Dworchak; Steven Sloane. (July 20 and July 24 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

NEW YORK GRAND OPERA—Vincent La Selva directs concert performances. July 17 at 7:30: "La Bohème."... July 24 at 7:30: "Lucia di Lammermoor." (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

NATIONAL CHORALE—Martin Josman directing. July 16 at 7:30 (rain date July 22): Concert excerpts from operettas by Romberg, Herbert, and Friml.... July 23 at 7:30 (no rain date): Solo and choral selections from nine of Leonard Bernstein's major stage works. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. No tickets necessary.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting the premiere of "Empty Bottle," an operatic murder mystery by Martin Kalmanoff that recounts a tale of love and death in gangster-ridden Little Italy during the nineteenth-thirties. Conducted by Elizabeth LaTorre and directed by Richard Leighton. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. July 19-20 at 7:30 and July 21 at 2:30. Through July 28.)

IN TOWN—CONCERTS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—In its annual series of free outdoor concerts, Samuel Wong conducts excerpts from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. **CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN**, July 15, with fireworks following the concert.... **PELHAM BAY PARK**, the Bronx, July 17.... Zdenek Macal conducts Mozart's Symphony No. 38 (the "Prague") and Mahler's Symphony No. 1. **CUNNINGHAM PARK**, Queens, July 21.... **CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN**, July 22.... **VAN CORTLANDT PARK**, the Bronx, July 23, followed by fireworks.... **PROSPECT PARK**, Brooklyn, July 24, followed by fireworks. (Evenings at 8. For rain-date information, call 875-5709.)

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—July 15: Chamber music by Mozart, performed by violinist Isaac Stern, violist Roberto Diaz, cellist Jian Wang, clarinetist Sharon Kam, and pianist Yefim Bronfman.... **NOTE:** A pre-concert recital, beginning at 7 and open to ticket-holders, spotlights Mr. Wang, who has matured considerably since Western audiences first encountered him, as a ten-year-old prodigy being discovered by Mr. Stern in the 1980 documentary "From Mao to Mozart."... July 16: Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in Beethoven's Second Symphony and Mozart's Symphony No. 20, K. 133. Katia and Marielle Labèque are the soloists in Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos, K. 365, and Barry Tuckwell is featured in the composer's Third Horn Concerto.... July 17: Same as the preceding concert, but with Mr. Tuckwell playing Mozart's Fourth Horn Concerto.... July 18-19: Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in the overture to Mozart's "The Impresario," Haydn's Symphony No. 96 (the "Miracle"), and Mozart's Fifth Violin Concerto (featuring Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg). Pianist Vladimir Feltsman performs Beethoven's Piano Concerto in D Major—not one of the five canonical piano concertos but, rather, the composer's own arrangement of his Violin Concerto, Op. 61.... **NOTE:** In pre-concert recitals, beginning both evenings at 7 and open to ticket-holders, Mr. Feltsman performs a Mozart sonata and a Schubert impromptu.... July 20-21: The Lar Lubovitch Dance Company performs choreographic interpretations of Mozart: "Concerto Six Twenty-two" (danced to the Clarinet Concerto, K. 622, featuring clarinetist Todd Levy); "Just Before Jupiter" (to the Symphony No. 40 in G Minor); and the premiere of "Sinfonia Concertante" (with musical solos by violinist Richard Rood and violist Mary Hamann). Ransom Wilson con-

ducts the Solisti New York.... July 22: To celebrate the signing of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1749, King George II commanded that a vast array of martial instruments be assembled—hoping, as he wrote, that "there would be no fiddles"—to accompany a pyrotechnical display in London's Green Park, St. James. Handel wrote the music, and when his "Royal Fireworks Music" was unveiled a week before the official event (at a rehearsal in Vauxhall Garden, without fireworks), a crowd of twelve thousand curious music lovers, each paying half a crown, jammed the park to hear what twenty-four oboes, twelve bassoons, nine trumpets, nine horns, three timpani, and a contrabassoon would sound like when played all at once. The celebration itself turned out to be a fiasco; only a fraction of the fireworks actually ignited, and those that did managed to set the launching apparatus on fire. But Handel's score was a huge success, and in this concert fifty-five wind players (plus a timpanist) rekindle its original orchestration. The program also includes two Mozart wind serenades for comparatively modest forces—one for eight players (K. 375), the other (the "Gran Partita," K. 361) for thirteen.... July 23-24: Armin Jordan conducts the Festival Orchestra in Schubert's "Overture in the Italian Style," D. 590, as well as three works by Mozart: the Symphony No. 34 in C Major; the Third Violin Concerto (featuring Joshua Bell); and the A-Major Piano Concerto, K. 488 (with Richard Goode). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Evenings at 8.)

SALOMON STRING QUARTET—The British period-instrument ensemble presents three quartets by Haydn. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. July 17 at 5:45.)

BARGEMUSIC—Ko Iwasaki and Peter Rejto offer assorted cello duets, a serenade by the nineteenth-century Italian cellist (and colleague of Liszt) Alfredo Piatti, and both of Beethoven's Op. 102 Cello Sonatas. Pianist Mihae Lee assists. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. July 18-19 at 7:30 and July 21 at 4.)

LES PETITS CHANTEURS DE MONACO—Philippe Debat directs the resident choir of the Cathedral in Monaco in music by Schütz, Carissimi, Fauré, Poulenc, and others. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. July 19 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

SHCHEDRYK CHILDREN'S CHOIR OF KIEV—The forty-three-member Ukrainian choir, whose members are between eight and fifteen years old, gained notice two weeks ago by winning top honors in the Des Moines International Choral Festival and Competition. Iryna Sablina directs the group in a wide-ranging program that includes Georgian and Ukrainian folksong settings, as well as more standard Western repertoire. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. July 21 at 4. No tickets necessary.)

GOLDMAN MEMORIAL BAND—Gene Young conducts transcriptions of orchestral works by Tchaikovsky, Bruch, and others, as well as arrangements and original compositions by Leroy Anderson. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. July 21 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

MIKAEL WAHLIN—The organist, from Göteborg, Sweden, performs a program that includes works by such Scandinavian composers as Hilding Rosenberg, Oskar Lindberg, and Einar Englund. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. July 23 at 7. Admission by contribution.)

OUT OF TOWN

TANGLEWOOD—July 16 at 8:30: John Williams conducts the Boston Pops.... July 17 at 8:30: Mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade and pianist Martin Katz present songs by Schubert, Puccini, Respighi, Satie, and others.... July 19 at 9: Evgeny Kissin is the soloist in Mozart's last piano concerto (in B-Flat Major, K. 595), in a program that also includes Beethoven's Eighth Symphony and the premiere of "Summer Lightning," an overture by Jacob Druckman celebrating the Tanglewood Music Center's fiftieth anniversary. Seiji Ozawa conducts the Boston Symphony.... **NOTE:** In a pre-concert performance, beginning at 7 and open to ticket-holders, John Oliver directs the Tanglewood Festival Chorus in motets and madrigals by Schein, Scheidt, and Monteverdi.... July 20 at 8:30: Roger Norrington conducts the Boston Symphony in Rossini's "William Tell" Overture, Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Sym-

phony, and Khachaturian's Flute Concerto (with soloist James Galway). . . . July 21 at 2:30: Helmuth Rilling conducts the Boston Symphony, the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, and soloists in a program that comprises two works by Mozart (the motet "Venite Populi" and the A-Major Piano Concerto, K. 488, with pianist Richard Goode) as well as Bach's Cantatas No. 26 and No. 149. Vocal soloists are soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson, mezzo-soprano Ingeborg Danz, tenor Stanford Olsen, and bass-baritone John Cheek. (Lenox, Mass. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

CARAMOOR MUSIC FESTIVAL—July 18 at 4:15: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble performs the Quintet for Trumpet and Strings by Eric Ewazen, as well as string sextets by Dvořák and Richard Strauss. . . . July 19 at 9: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble plays divertimentos by Mozart and Mel Powell (the latter featuring trumpeter Chris Gekker), as well as a Dvořák serenade. . . . July 20 at 8:30: André Previn conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in Mozart's Symphony No. 29, Third Violin Concerto (with Joshua Bell), and C-Minor Piano Concerto (with the conductor as soloist). . . . July 21 at 5:30: Trios by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Brahms, performed by Messrs. Previn and Bell, as well as clarinetist William Blount and cellist Allison Eldredge. (Katonah, N.Y. For information about tickets, call 1-914 232-1252.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL—July 19 at 8:30: Chamber music by Telemann, Ezra Laderman, and Brahms (his Horn Trio, Op. 40). . . . July 20 at 8:30: Works by Telemann, Shostakovich (his E-Minor Piano Trio), and Brahms (his G-Major Quintet, Op. 111). (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. For information about tickets, call 1-203 542-5537.)

WATERLOO FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA—Gerard Schwarz conducts David Diamond's First Symphony, Beethoven's First Piano Concerto (featuring Cécile Licad), and Brahms' Second Symphony. (Waterloo Village, Stanhope, N.J. July 20 at 8:30. For ticket and travel information, call 1-201 347-4700.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

SHABBA RANKS—This twenty-five-year-old Jamaican singer-rapper, who has just made his major-label debut with the album "As Raw as Ever," headlines an old-fashioned revue featuring a lineup of bands as long as your arm. With a speeded-up reggae bass line backing him up, Shabba Ranks' syncopated singsong delivery has much in common with the hip-hop version of rap, and his smoking duet with KRS-One, "The Jam," represents a marriage of sorts of the two styles. ("The world is scramblin' to patois" is how Shabba Ranks himself put it in a recent interview.) The other highlight of this show is a brand-new band called the Brand New Heavies, fronted by the hypnotic soul diva N'Dea Davenport. Also appearing: Chubb Rock, Main Source, Ed OG & da Bulldogs, and Cypress Hill. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. July 17 at 11.)

QUEENSRŶCHE—Battle-axe logos, studded leather, and heavy-metal marketing only partly obscure this Seattle band's actual groove, which is an elegantly updated blend of seventies influences. Their sound owes a large debt to Boston, and there are lesser echoes of Heart, Yes, Bad Company, and Van Halen. (The 1988 album "operation: mindcrime," Queensrŷche's commercial breakthrough, was, believe it or not, a *concept* album.) A few thoughts and a hint of political dissent lurk in the lyrics, but the band's music is basically catchy and kitschy—delicious aural junk food. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. July 24 at 7:30.)

SISTERS OF MERCY/PUBLIC ENEMY—According to Sisters of Mercy singer Andrew Eldritch, "Rock doesn't have to be spandex, perms, and stupidity." To prove his point—and, not coincidentally, to sell out large venues like Radio City—his band has joined forces with the great rap group Public Enemy and embarked on a nineteen-city tour, alternately dubbed the Vision Thing Tour (after the Sisters' latest album) and the Tune In, Turn On, Burn Out Tour. (The recently reunited punk-era band Gang of Four, the white rap group Young Black Teenagers, and metal heads Warrior Soul are also on the bill.) Whether the evening will achieve some grand fusion or turn out to be a case of oil and

water is an open question. To go from Chuck D's chesty black-nationalist exhortations to Eldritch's nasty gothic Brit-rock, redolent of Bowie and Iggy Pop and the whole sunglasses-at-night ethos, may involve whiplash, but it won't be a boring ride. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. July 24 at 8.)

VIOLENT FEMMES—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. July 18 at 8.

EMMYLOU HARRIS—Beacon Theatre. July 19 at 8.

WHITNEY HOUSTON—With After 7. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. July 23 at 8.)

THE SPINNERS—World Financial Center Plaza, Battery Park City. July 24 at 7:30; rain date July 25. No tickets necessary.

JONES BEACH THEATRE—July 15: Bruce Hornsby & the Range, with Rosanne Cash. . . . July 16: Daryl Hall and John Oates. . . . July 19-20: Don Henley, with Susanna Hoffs. . . . July 21: Yes. . . . July 23: Stevie Nicks. . . . July 24: The Judds, with Alan Jackson. (1-516 221-1000. Evenings at 8.)

JAZZ IN JULY—The 92nd Street Y's annual summer series. July 16: Walt Levinsky and the Great American Swing Band, Carol Woods, and Dick Hyman. . . . July 17: Kenny Davern and Giora Feidman. . . . July 18: Group Five!, the Mike Renzi quartet, Frank Wess, and Marano and Monteiro. . . . July 23: Manhattan Rhythm Kings, Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks, Ken Peplowski, Tina Fabrique, and Mr. Hyman. . . . July 24: Dave McKenna, Derek Smith, Oliver Jones, Bob Seeley, and Mr. Hyman. (Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Evenings at 8. Through July 25.)

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE—July 20 at 3: Lil' Ed and the Blues Imperials, with Otis Clay as the opening act. . . . July 21 at 3: Sister Carol. (Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

METS—Vs. the San Francisco Giants, July 15-16 at 7:40 and July 17 at 1:40. . . . Vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers, July 18-19 at 7:40, July 20 at 1:15, and July 21 at 1:40.

YANKEES—Vs. the Seattle Mariners, July 23-24 at 7:30 and July 25 at 1.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499, and the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

HORSES—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Sword Dancer is on July 20. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays, except Mondays and Thursdays, at 1:05. . . . At Atlantic City Race Course: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15. . . . **TROTTING** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8, Tuesdays at 1, and Sundays at 6. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:45.

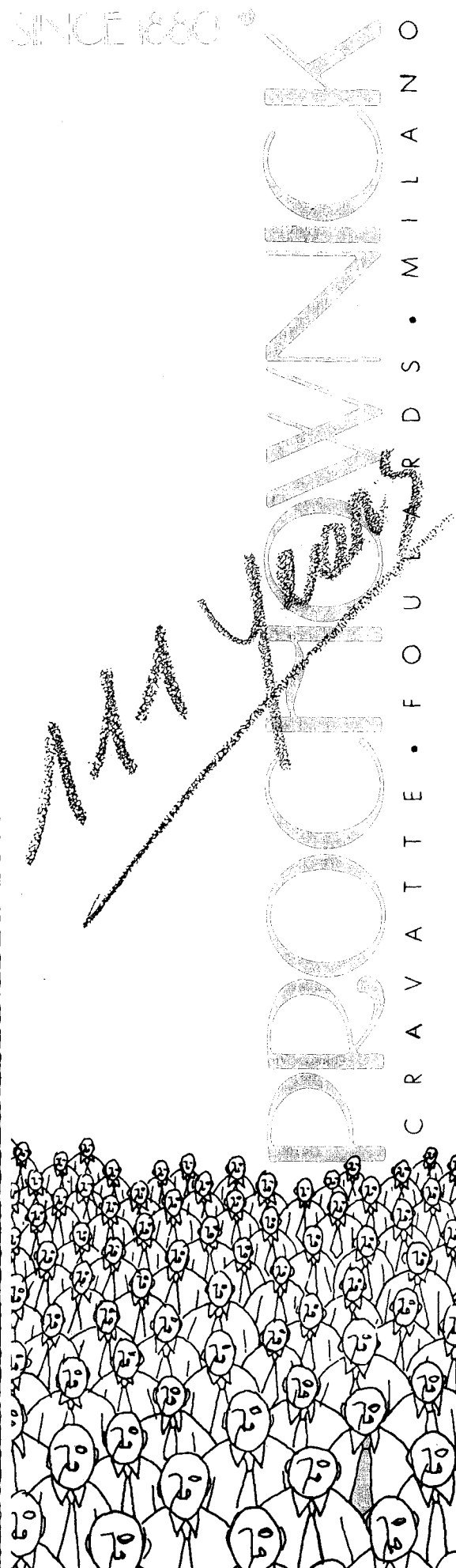
HUMANS—The New York Games, a preview of 1992's Track and Field Olympians. (Columbia University's Wien Stadium, Baker Field, Broadway at 218th St. July 20 from 3 to 6. For tickets, call 307-7171.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

TWILIGHT DANCING—By the fountain in Lincoln Center. July 17: The Emery Davis Orchestra. . . . July 18: Bob Hardwick and his orchestra. . . . July 19: Pé-De-Boi. . . . July 20: Yomo Toro. . . . July 24: The Duke's Men. (Evenings at 8:15. Tickets available on the nights of the events.)

READINGS—July 18 at 8:30: William Kennedy and Ann Beattie read from their own prose. (SummerStage, Rumsey Playground, mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 360-2777.) . . . July 23 at 7: Patti Davis reads from her new novel, "A House of Secrets." (Brennans, Fifth Ave. at 48th St. No tickets necessary.)

WALKS—July 20: A Bleecker Street tour, from east to west. Meets at the southwest corner of Broadway and Bleecker St. at 1. Sponsored by Citywalks. . . . July 21: A stroll, starting at 3, around the neighborhood called Turtle Bay (in the East Forties). Sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. For information and reservations, call 265-2663.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)

Theatre 1: "Slacker" (directed by Richard Linklater).

Theatre 2: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).

Theatre 4: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tsilla Chelton.

Theatre 5: "An Angel at My Table" (†).

Theatre 6: "Regarding Henry."

PUBLIC THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

July 15: Theatre closed.

July 16-17: "The Gang's All Here" (1943, Busby Berkeley), with Alice Faye, Carmen Miranda, Charlotte Greenwood, and James Ellison; and "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (1949, Berkeley), with Frank Sinatra, Esther Williams, and Gene Kelly.

July 18: "Les Girls" (†) and "Daddy Long Legs" (†).

July 19-21: "Singin' in the Rain" (1952, Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen), with Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, Donald O'Connor, Jean Hagen, and Millard Mitchell; and "On the Town" (1949, Kelly and Donen), with Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Jules Munshin, Betty Garrett, Vera-Ellen, and Ann Miller.

July 22: Theatre closed.

July 23-24: "The Pirate" (†); and "An American in Paris" (1951, Vincente Minnelli), with Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron, Oscar Levant, Georges Guétary, and Nina Foch.

MOVELAND 8TH STREET TRIPLEX, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.

Theatre 3: Through July 18: "Dying Young" (†). From July 19: "Dutch" (Peter Faiman), with Ed O'Neill, Ethan Randall, and JoBeth Williams.

LOEWS VILLAGE THEATRE VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)

Theatre 1: "Thelma & Louise" (†).

Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 4: "Thelma & Louise" (†).

Theatre 5: "Truth or Dare" (†).

Theatre 6: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

Theatre 7: Through July 18: "Boyz N the Hood." From July 19: "Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey" (Peter Hewitt), with Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, William Sadler, Joss Ackland, and George Carlin.

CINEMA VILLAGE 12TH STREET, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

"Eating" (†).

VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)

Theatre 1: "Every Other Weekend" (Nicole Garcia, in French), with Nathalie Baye.

Theatre 2: "101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (Zhang Yimou, in Mandarin).

Theatre 4: "Dark Obsession" (Nicholas Broomfield), with Gabriel Byrne and Amanda Donohoe.

Theatre 5: "The Rocketeer" (†).

Theatre 6: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

Theatre 7: "Impromptu" (†).

CINEMA VILLAGE 3RD AVENUE, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

"Shadow of the Raven" (Hrafn Gunnlaugsson, in Icelandic).

LOEWS 19TH STREET EAST 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

Theatre 2: "Regarding Henry."

Theatre 3: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S • M • T • W • T • F • S						
	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 14.

Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."

Theatre 6: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear."

GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

"101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Dying Young" (†).

MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 2: Through July 18: "Thelma & Louise" (†). From July 19: "Dutch" (Peter Faiman), with Ed O'Neill, Ethan Randall, and JoBeth Williams.

Theatre 3: "The Rocketeer" (†).

Theatre 4: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 3: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Truth or Dare" (†).

SUTTON 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Theatre 1: "The Rocketeer" (†).

Theatre 2: "101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Dying Young" (†).

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

MANHATTAN TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).

Theatre 2: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 2: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

CINEMA I, CINEMA II, AND CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: "Don Juan, My Love" (Antonio Mercero, in Spanish).

Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

Theatre 3: "Thelma & Louise" (†).

GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.

Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day."

BECKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

Through July 18: "Backdraft" (†).

From July 19: "Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey" (Peter Hewitt), with Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, William Sadler, Joss Ackland, and George Carlin.

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"The Miracle" (†).

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).

Theatre 2: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

86TH STREET EAST TWIN, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

Theatre 2: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Theatre 1: Through July 16: "Marquis" (1989, directed by Henri Xhonneux; in French).

From July 17: "The Famine Within" (Katherine Gilday), a documentary.

Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.

Theatre 3: Through July 18: "Double Indemnity" (1944, Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson; and "A Foreign Affair" (1948, Wilder), with Jean Arthur, Marlene Dietrich, and John Lund.

From July 19: "White Dog" (1982, Samuel Fuller), with Paul Winfield, Kristy McNichol, Burl Ives, Fuller, and Paul Bartel.

BLEECKER MOVIE HOUSE, 144 Bleecker St. (807-9205)

Theatre 1: "Extramuros" (Miguel Picazo, in Spanish), with Mercedes Sampietro and Carmen Maura.

Theatre 2: "Poison" (Todd Haynes).

WAVERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

Theatre 2: "Jungle Fever" (†).

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"What About Bob?" (†).

ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

Theatre 2: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "Truly, Madly, Deeply" (Anthony Minghella), with Juliet Stevenson and Alan Rickman.

Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (Paul Schrader), with Natasha Richardson, Rupert Everett, Christopher Walken, and Helen Mirren.

Theatre 3: "Hangin' with the Homeboys" (Joseph Vasquez).

Theatre 4: "Soapdish" (†).

CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 2: "Dying Young" (†).

Theatre 3: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 4: "Jungle Fever" (†).

Theatre 5: "Boyz N the Hood" (John Singleton).

Theatre 6: Through July 18: "Jungle Fever" (†). From July 19: "Dutch" (Peter Faiman), with Ed O'Neill, Ethan Randall, and JoBeth Williams.

Theatre 7: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 8: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

Theatre 9: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: Through July 18: "Backdraft" (†).

From July 19: "Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey" (Peter Hewitt), with Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, William Sadler, Joss Ackland, and George Carlin.

Theatre 2: "Truth or Dare" (†).

Theatre 3: "The Rocketeer" (†).

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

"Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "Truth or Dare" (†).
Theatre 2: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

Theatre 3: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 4: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

Theatre 5: Through July 18: "Dying Young" (†). From July 19: "Dutch" (Peter Faiman), with Ed O'Neill, Ethan Randall, and JoBeth Williams.

Theatre 6: "Impromptu" (†).
LEGFIELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"City Slickers" (†).
LOEWS FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"Soapdish" (†).
57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through July 18: "Impromptu" (†).
From July 19: "Prisoners of the Sun" (Stephen Wallace), with Bryan Brown, George Takei, Terry O'Quinn, and Toshi Shioya.

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMAS, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

Theatre 1: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez, in French), with Tilla Chelton.
Theatre 2: "La Femme Nikita" (†).

LOEWS FINE ARTS, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"What About Bob?" (†).

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Soapdish" (†).

62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
Through July 18: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

From July 19: "Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey" (Peter Hewitt), with Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, William Sadler, Joss Ackland, and George Carlin.

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Everybody's Fine" (Giuseppe Tornatore, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni; and "Cinema Paradiso" (Tornatore, in Italian), with Philippe Noiret and Salvatore Cascio.

Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).
Theatre 3: "A Paper Wedding" (Michel Brault, in French), with Genevieve Bujold.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Dying Young" (†).

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (†).

Theatre 3: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, Bill Nunn, Mikki Allen, Donald Moffat, and Nancy Marchand.

Theatre 4: "Thelma & Louise" (†).
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.

Theatre 6: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Jungle Fever" (†).
Theatre 2: "101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

OLYMPIA 1 AND II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Boyz n the Hood" (John Singleton).

Theatre 2: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION CENTER, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (directed by James Cameron), with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Robert Patrick.

Theatre 3: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day." Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day." Theatre 5: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (†).

Theatre 6: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

Busey, Lori Petty, John McGinley, and James Le Gros.

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through July 18: "The Rocketeer" (†).

From July 19: "Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey" (Peter Hewitt), with Keanu Reeves, Alex Winter, William Sadler, Joss Ackland, and George Carlin.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

Theatre 2: Through July 18: "Thelma & Louise" (†). From July 19: "The Rocketeer" (†).

Theatre 3: "101 Dalmatians" (1961), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Boyz n the Hood" (John Singleton).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through July 18: "Jungle Fever" (†). From July 19: "Dutch" (Peter Faiman), with Ed O'Neill, Ethan Randall, and JoBeth Williams.

Theatre 2: "Problem Child II" (Brian Levant), with John Ritter.

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead" (Stephen Herek), with Christina Applegate.

Theatre 2: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through July 15: "The French Connection" (1971, directed by William Friedkin), with Gene Hackman, Roy Scheider, Fernando Rey, and Tony LoBianco; and "French Connection II" (1975, John Frankenheimer), with Hackman and Rey.

July 16-17: "Claudia" (1943, Edmund Goulding), with Dorothy McGuire, Robert Young, and Ina Claire; and "Claudia and David" (1946, Walter Lang), with McGuire, Young, and Mary Astor.

July 18-20: "Superman" (see blurb at right) and "Superman II" (see blurb at right).

July 21-22: "Father of the Bride" (†); and "Father's Little Dividend" (1951, Vincente Minnelli), with Spencer Tracy, Elizabeth Taylor, and Joan Bennett.

July 23-24: "Die Hard" (1988, John McTiernan), with Bruce Willis, Bonnie Bedelia, Alan Rickman, Alexander Godunov, Reginald Veljohnson, and Paul Gleason; and "Die Hard 2" (1990, Renny Harlin), with Willis, Bedelia, William Sadler, John Amos, and Dennis Franz.

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through July 18: "White Dog" (1982, Samuel Fuller), with Paul Winfield, Kristy McNichol, Burl Ives, Fuller, and Paul Bartel.

July 19-20: "Pickup on South Street" (†); and "Park Row" (1952, Samuel Fuller), with Mary Welch and Gene Evans.

July 21-22: "Underworld, U.S.A." (1961, Samuel Fuller), with Cliff Robertson, Dolores Dorn, and Beatrice Kay; and "The Crimson Kimono" (1959, Fuller), with Victoria Shaw, Glenn Corbett, and James Shigeta.

July 23: "I Shot Jesse James" (1949, Samuel Fuller), with Preston Foster and Barbara Britton; and "The Baron of Arizona" (1950, Fuller), with Vincent Price and Ellen Drew.

July 24: "Shockproof" (1949, Douglas Sirk), with Cornel Wilde and Patricia Knight; "Scandal Sheet" (1952, Phil Karlson), with Broderick Crawford and Donna Reed; and "Power of the Press" (1943, Lew Landers), with Lee Tracy and Gloria Dickson.

NEWMAN THEATRE, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
July 15: Theatre closed.

July 16-17: "Straw Dogs" (1972, Sam Peckinpah), with Dustin Hoffman and Susan George; and "Vengeance Is Mine" (1979, Shohei Imamura; in Japanese).

July 18: "Kind Hearts and Coronets" (†); "The Lavender Hill Mob" (1951, Charles Crichton), with Alec Guinness, Stanley Holloway, Alfie Bass, and Sidney James; and "The Ladykillers" (1956, Alexander Mackendrick), with Guinness, Cecil Parker, Peter Sellers, and Herbert Lom.

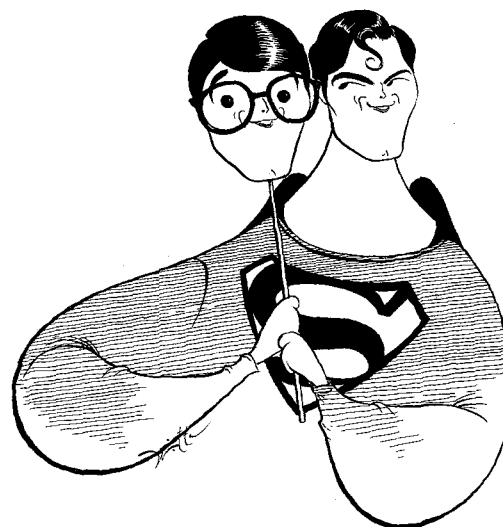
July 19-20: "Smiles of a Summer



The Biograph Cinema's program of series double bills provides a gratifying study in contrasts with the pairing, on July 18-20, of "Superman" (1978)—a bloated piece of mythmaking—and "Superman II" (1981), one of the zippiest of all comic-strip movies.

"Superman" gets mired in the origins of the Man of Steel. The director, Richard Donner, depicts the destruction of Superman's home planet, Krypton, and his rocket escape to earth as if it were *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. By the time he gets around to staging the outlandish derring-do, he's forced to cram in an apocalypse per minute.

"Superman II" begins with a lightening reprise of "Superman's" high points that has more flair than the sum of that deadhead epic. The new director, Richard Lester, then sends a three-stage plot into orbit. A trio of Kryptonian super-villains (Terence Stamp, Jack O'Halloran, Sarah Douglas) hold the world at bay; Superman's archenemy, Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman), strikes a deal with the Kryptonians; and Superman turns himself into a mere mortal in order to consummate his love for Lois Lane (Margot Kidder). The script, by David and Leslie Newman, Mario Puzo, and Tom Mankiewicz, humanizes the superhero, who must choose between romance and duty. The actors get to work with amusing lines and pranks. Hackman's Luthor is a lip-smacking parody of an indomitably self-satisfied hustler. And Christopher Reeve refines his Superman impersonation, radiating good-humored decency. As Superman develops feelings of anguish and pain, Reeve seems to transform himself physically, looking slimmer as well as more diffident. Why hasn't anyone figured out how to use this actor since? Reeve supplies the emotional anchor—and a dab of poignance—to this wry, calamity-filled adventure.



Christopher Reeve as "Superman"

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

- Night" (1955, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, Jarl Kulle, and Harriet Andersson; and "Wild Strawberries" (1957, Bergman; in Swedish), with Victor Sjöström, Ingrid Thulin, and Björnstrand.
- July 21: "The Gold Rush" (1925, Charlie Chaplin; silent), with Chaplin, Mack Swain, and Georgia Hale; and "The General" (†).
- July 22: Theatre closed.
- July 23-24: "Demon Pond" (1982, Masahiro Shinoda; in Japanese), with Tamasaburo Bondo; and "The Ballad of Narayama" (1983, Shohei Imamura; in Japanese).
- THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS**, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
- July 15: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French), with Emmanuèle Rivà and Eiji Okada; and "Muriel" (1963, Resnais; in French), with Delphine Seyrig.
- July 16: "The Wanderers" (1979, Philip Kaufman), with Ken Wahl; and "The Warriors" (1979, Walter Hill), with Michael Beck, James Remar, and Thomas Waits.
- July 17: "Red Desert" (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti and Richard Harris; and "Blow-Up" (1966, Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.
- July 18: "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953, Jean Negulesco), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall; and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953, Howard Hawks), with Jane Russell, Monroe, and Charles Coburn.
- July 19-20: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann; and "Grand Hotel" (†).
- July 21: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret; and "Love on the Run" (1979, Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie-France Pisier, and Claude Jade.
- July 22: "The Ritual" (1969, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin, Anders Ek, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "After the Rehearsal" (1984, Bergman; in Swedish), with Erland Josephson and Thulin.
- July 23: "Cavalcade" (1933, Frank Lloyd), with Diana Wynyard and Clive Brook; and "In Which We Serve" (1942, Noël Coward and David Lean), with Coward, Celia Johnson, John Mills, Kay Walsh, Michael Wilding, and Richard Attenborough.
- July 24: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, Burl Ives, Judith Anderson, Madeleine Sherwood, and Jack Carson; and

"The Night of the Iguana" (1964, John Huston), with Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, Deborah Kerr, and Sue Lyon.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

- MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—July 15 at 2:30 and July 18 at 6: "Beggars of Life" (1928, directed by William Wellman), with Wallace Beery, Louise Brooks, and Richard Arlen; and "Wild Boys of the Road" (1933, Wellman), with Frankie Darro, Rochelle Hudson, and Dorothy Coonan. . . . July 15 at 6 and July 18 at 2:30: "The Train" (1955, John Frankenheimer), with Burt Lancaster, Paul Scofield, and Jeanne Moreau. . . . July 16 at 2:30 and 6: Two recent Soviet films. . . . July 19 at 2:30 and July 21 at 5: "Boxcar Bertha" (1972, Martin Scorsese), with Barbara Hershey, David Carradine, and Barry Primus. . . . July 19 at 6 and July 20 at 2: "Warm Nights on a Slow Moving Train" (1987, Bob Ellis), with Wendy Hughes, Colin Friels, and Norman Kave. . . . July 20 at 5 and July 23 at 2:30: "Stand By Me" (1986, Rob Reiner), with Wil Wheaton, River Phoenix, and Corey Feldman. . . . July 21 at 2 and July 22 at 6: "Berlin Express" (1948, Jacques Tourneur), with Merle Oberon, Robert Ryan, and Paul Lukas. . . . July 22 at 2:30 and July 23 at 6: "Time of the Gypsies" (1989, Emir Kusturica; in Romany).
- ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES**, 32-34 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (477-2714)—July 17 at 6: A program of four short films. . . . July 17 at 6 and 8, July 18-19 at 9, July 20 at 7 and 9, July 21 at 9, and July 24 at 7 and 9: "Dead Ringer" (1981, Allan Nicholls), with Meat Loaf. . . . July 17-19 at 8 and July 20 at 9: "My Dinner with Abbie" (1989, Nancy Cohen) and "Guedra" (1991, Andrea Beeman). . . . July 18-19 at 7 and July 20-21 at 5: "The Distant Journey" (1948, Alfred Radok). . . . July 18 at 10: "Rapt" (1934, Dimitri Kirsanoff). . . . July 19 at 10: A program of eight short films. . . . July 20-21 at 7: "Rhythms of the Heart" (1989), "Woodbridge" (1985), and "Sweetblood" (1991), all by Steve Sanguedolce.
- METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART**, Fifth Ave. at 81st St. (879-5500)—July 19 at 6: "8½" (1963, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni, Claudia Cardinale, Anouk Aimée, and Sandra Milo. . . . July 20 at 6: "Rear Window" (1954, Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, Wendell Corey, Thelma Ritter, and Raymond Burr.
- AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—"Leo McCarey: The King of Comedy," a program of films directed by McCarey. July 16 at 2: "Part-Time Wife" (1930), with

Edmund Lowe and Leila Hyams. . . . July 17 at 2: "Indiscreet" (1931), with Gloria Swanson and Ben Lyon. . . . July 18 at 2: "The Kid from Spain" (1932), with Eddie Cantor. . . . July 19 at 2: "Duck Soup" (1933), with the Marx Brothers. . . . July 20 at July 23 at 2: "Six of a Kind" (1934), with W. C. Fields, George Burns, and Gracie Allen. . . . July 20 at 4 and July 24 at 2: "Belle of the Nineties" (1934), with Mae West. . . . July 21 at 2: "Ruggles of Red Gap" (1935), with Charles Laughton and Mary Boland. . . . July 21 at 4: "The Milky Way" (1936), with Harold Lloyd and Adolphe Menjou.

CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—July 17 at 8: "The Black Pirate" (1926, Albert Parker; silent), with Douglas Fairbanks and Bill Dove. . . . July 24 at 8: "La Bohème" (1922, King Vidor; silent), with Lillian Gish and John Gilbert. Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 17 at 12:30 and 6: "Secret Meeting" (1959, Julien Duvivier; in French), with Danielle Darrieux, Bernard Blier, Serge Reggiani, and Lino Ventura. . . . July 17 at 3:15 and 8:45: "The Black Monocle" (1961, Georges Lautner; in French, with no English subtitles), with Paul Meurisse, Blier, Pierre Blanchard, and Marie Dubois. . . . July 24 at 12:30 and 6: "Le Grand Jeu" (1934, Jacques Feyder; in French), with Françoise Rosay, Marie Bell, Pierre Richard-Willm, and Charles Vanel. . . . July 24 at 3:15 and 8:45: "Four Flights to Love" (1940, Abel Gance; in French), with Fernand Gravey, Micheline Presle, Elvire Popesco, and Robert Le Vigan.

SYMPHONY SPACE, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—July 18 at 7:30: "The Leopard" (1963, Luchino Visconti; in Italian), with Burt Lancaster, Alain Delon, and Claudia Cardinale. . . . July 19 at 7:30: "Pierrot le Fou" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina. . . . July 19 at 9:15: "A Woman Is a Woman" (1960, Godard; in French), with Belmondo and Karina. . . . July 20 at 7: "Mozart: A Childhood Chronicle" (1976, Klaus Kirschner; in German). . . . July 21 at 4: "The 400 Blows" (1959, François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . July 21 at 6: "Jules and Jim" (1961, Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre. . . . July 24 at 6:30: "The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant" (1972, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla. . . . July 24 at 8:45: "Fox and His Friends" (1975, Fassbinder; in German), with Fassbinder.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE—Based on the autobiography of the New Zealand novelist and poet Janet Frame. The film covers the first forty years or so of the writer's life—she was born in 1924—and takes close to three hours to tell the story. When it's all over, you feel that you know far too little about Janet Frame and far too much about the film's director, Jane Campion. The movie (which was made as a three-part miniseries for Australian television) is a succession of odd, mannered tableaux, more or less in the style of Campion's 1990 art-house hit, "Sweetie." The compositions emphasize the peculiarities of Janet's appearance, especially in her childhood and awkward adolescence: she has a stiff, frizzy mop of bright-orange hair, and her teeth are badly decayed. The Janet Frame we see in this film doesn't seem to have an inner life, and without that she has no life at all. Even the most dramatic events in her life are treated so flatly and elliptically that we're unable to respond; time after time, we find that we can't orient ourselves in crucial scenes, because the director hasn't bothered to establish the characters or the setting. Writers' lives are weird enough without being subjected to this sort of willful disruption of their emotional continuity. Campion's perverse exercise in biographical filmmaking deserves a new title: "My Incomprehensible Career." Janet is played by three actresses:

as a child, by Alexia Keogh; as a young teenager, by Karen Fergusson; and, as an adult, by Kerry Fox. Screenplay by Laura Jones.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Angelika Film Center.)

BACKDRAFT—This urban disaster/action movie makes the audience laugh just once; when a stalwart fireman (Scott Glenn), still on the scene of his latest conquered blaze, takes a drag on a cigarette. It's one of the few grand-old-movie gestures that click in what amounts to a compendium of men-at-work clichés. The plot centers on estranged brothers Kurt Russell (a soon-to-be-legendary firefighter) and William Baldwin (an anxious apprentice), who work out their differences in the midst of mysterious arsons and towering infernos. Gregory Widen's script is like a *Mad* parody played straight, full of "Scenes We Wouldn't Like to See." The effects are bogging, but the director, Ron Howard, employs them like a cross between a night-club hypnotist and a hardware salesman—his characters murmur about fire's mesmerizing and bestial qualities, then he hits the audience with flames and hoses. Russell is appealingly brash until a bogus subplot forces him to suggest borderline psychosis. Jennifer Jason Leigh and Rebecca De Mornay also show up, but only Robert De Niro, as an arson investigator, and Donald Sutherland, as a pyromaniac, rise above the material.—M.S. (Beekman, and 23rd St. West Triplex; through July 18.)

CITY SLICKERS—This feel-good comedy, directed by Ron Underwood from a script by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is a depressingly efficient piece of Hollywood product. The hero, Mitch Robbins (Billy Crystal), is a thirty-nine-year-old New York family man who's going through a killer midlife crisis. His wife (Patricia Wettig) gets so fed up with his moping that she virtually orders him to take a vacation with his buddies Ed (Bruno Kirby) and Phil (Daniel Stern); Ed, a daredevil, macho type, has arranged for them to spend two weeks on a real cattle drive out West. Mitch's wife looks him in the eye, and says earnestly, "Go and find your smile"—and, ninety minutes later, there it is, a grin as big as all outdoors. His pals pick up the odd nugget of wisdom along the trail, too. The movie alternates predictable tenderfoot gags (sore behinds, stampedes, and the like) with long, ludicrous passages of group-therapy-on-the-range. Jack Palance, as Curly, the trail boss, manages some dry, macabre comic effects, and the animals are good—they're interesting to look at, and they don't make bad jokes. You can't help sympathizing with the cattle; by the time the movie is over, you know what it feels like to be part of the herd. Also with Helen Slater.—T.R. (6/17/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

DADDY LONG LEGS (1955)—This story of a May-December romance between an adorable orphan and her benefactor was published in 1912; it became a 1914 play starring Ruth Chatterton, a 1919 silent movie with Mary Pickford, and a 1931 talkie with Janet Gaynor. By the time Leslie Caron and Fred Astaire made this musical version, the accumulated adorableness was overpowering. Everybody involved seems to be trying to compensate for the dated, sentimental material. Astaire doesn't look comfortable in the balletic "Guardian Angel" dance he does with Caron, and her healthy gamine charm calls attention to the age difference between them. He was about fifty-six, she perhaps twenty-four, and when he tries to look charmed by her, his smiles appear forced, even pained. These two don't connect. There's one lively number—"Sluefoot"—but the two overdressed ballets choreographed by Roland Petit seem endless. Johnny Mercer did come through with a new song, "Something's Gotta Give." Directed by Jean Negulesco, from a script by Phoebe and Henry Ephron. With Thelma Ritter, Fred Clark, Larry Keating, and Terry Moore.—P.K. (Public Theatre; July 18.)

DYING YOUNG—Julia Roberts' vehicles are so closely linked that they resemble a series. Even the "movie tie-in" editions of the original novels "Sleeping with the Enemy" and "Dying Young" sport similar red-white-and-black cover art; it's as if they were installments in a Julia Roberts line of contemporary gothic romances. In her latest outing, America's favorite working girl is the nursemaid-turned-lover of a leukemia-stricken upper-class twit (Campbell Scott), a cousin of the psychotic U.C.T. in "Enemy" and the mercenary one in "Pretty Woman." The director, Joel Schumacher, and the writer, Richard Friedenberg, simplify and prettify the material. Unlike her counterpart in Marti Leimbach's book, Roberts never two-times her edgy, arrogant lover with a more easygoing man (Vincent D'Onofrio). The onslaught-of-illness stuff is rendered not with emotion but with makeup, and lighting. The actors are reduced to models, in a film that tries to sell compassion by the shot. With Colleen Dewhurst, Ellen Burstyn, and David Selby.—M.S. (Bay Cinema, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency. . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas; through July 18.)

EATING—All the action in Henry Jaglom's film takes place at the fortieth-birthday party of a Southern California woman named Helene (Lisa Richards), and all the characters—thirty-eight of them—are women. None of the women at this party—with the exception of Helene's mother (Frances Bergen), who represents the values of an older generation—can eat without guilt; several of them have clinical eating disorders, for which they hate themselves. Jaglom films them in his usual group-therapy style: the camera remains fixed as characters lob banal confessions and accusations at each other. This is meant to create the illusion of raw emotional truth, but the bulimics' ball Jaglom throws here isn't much of a party, and it's bad therapy, too. Whatever Jaglom may have intended, his film winds up trivializing its theme and humiliating its subjects. He's advertising the movie as "A Very Serious Comedy About Women and Food," but its "serious" message is glibly offensive, and there's nothing funny about it.—T.R. (5/20/91) (Cinema Village 12th Street.)

EUROPA EUROPA—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an elite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His

family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his bar mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor, Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness; as translator and mascot, he accompanies the German soldiers on their march through Russia. He's an awfully adaptable kid: attractive, personable, good at languages, and deft at lying. By the time he is initiated into the Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, how-



Gene Kelly in "The Pirate"

ever, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. She shows us the thoroughness of Nazi terror in the pained expression of a teen-age boy who doesn't dare allow himself to be seduced. Also with Julie Delpy, Andre Wilms, Halina Labonarska, and Rene Hofschneider. The real Salomon Perel appears, as himself, in the movie's final scene. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

FATHER OF THE BRIDE (1950)—Deeply conventional, plushly middle-class view of normal romance and marriage, seen from the point of view of the banker father (Spencer Tracy) of the bride (Elizabeth Taylor, still in her teens). Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich wrote this comedy with an eye to the father's misgivings about the groom and his Oedipal fixation on his daughter; it's an archetypal sitcom setup. Vincente Minnelli directed very simply and skillfully, keeping us at a discreet distance; we look on at the follies of sensible, prosperous people in their clean, comfortable, WASPY homes. Within its own terms the picture is sensitive and very well done, but it's also tiresomely fraudulent—an idealization of a safe, shuttered existence, the good life according to M-G-M, twenty-four-karat complacency. Tracy, at the center of things, gives his basic sturdy-clod performance, somewhat better modulated than usual. Elizabeth Taylor is gentle and soft-toned, and Minnelli uses her sparingly, resisting the temptation to feast on her in closeup; she and Joan Bennett, who plays her mother, match up together neatly. Don Taylor as the groom is a mistake, though; he lacks solidity—he's so nice-boy lightweight he's like an updated David Manners. With Leo G. Carroll, Melville Cooper, Billie Burke, Moroni Olsen, and Russ (then Rusty) Tamblyn. From the book by Edward Streeter.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; July 21-22.)

LA FEMME NIKITA—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika

Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)
THE GENERAL (1926)—One of Buster Keaton's most celebrated comedies. It's a classic and many people swear by it, although it isn't funny in the freely inventive way of his "Steamboat Bill, Jr." (1927). Its humor is too drawn out for laughter. And yet it has a beauty; it has the shape of comedy. The time is the Civil War. Keaton plays a shy railroad engineer on a steam engine called *The General*. He also wrote the script and directed, in collaboration with Clyde Bruckman. The girl is Marion Mack. Silent.—P.K. (Newman Theatre; July 21.)

GRAND HOTEL (1932)—From her first line, "I have never been so tired in my life," Greta Garbo sets the movie in vibration with her extraordinary sensual presence. ("Mademoiselle Hamlet," Alice B. Toklas called her.)

Garbo plays a *première danseuse* whose career is fading—a weary, disillusioned woman briefly reconciled to life by a passion for a shady nobleman: John Barrymore. Garbo was only twenty-six when she played this role (Barrymore was fifty), but the fatigue, the despair, seem genuine. There is every reason to reject "Grand Hotel" as an elaborate chunk of artifice; there are no redeeming qualities in Vicki Baum's excruciating concepts of character and fate, and anyone who goes to see this movie expecting an intelligent script, or even "good acting," should have his head examined. Most of the players give impossibly bad performances—they chew up the camera. But if you want to see what screen glamour used to be, and what, originally, "stars" were, this is perhaps the best example of all time. As a secretary working in the hotel, there is a startlingly sexy woman named Joan Crawford, who bears only a slight resemblance to the later zombie of that name; at about twenty-six also, she still connected with other actors, and her scenes with Lionel Barrymore (in one of his rare

likable performances: he's a dying man spending his life savings on a last fling) show a real rapport. The fifth star is Wallace Beery, as a brutal, crooked tycoon; he overacts mightily and charmlessly. Also in the cast are Lewis Stone and Jean Hersholt. Directed by Edmund Goulding, from William A. Drake's adaptation of Vicki Baum's "Menschen im Hotel."—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; July 19-20.)

IMPROMPTU—James Lapine's film is an ebullient and absurdly entertaining account of the famous love affair of George Sand and Frédéric Chopin. The script, by Sarah Kernochan, makes Sand's wooing and winning of frail, chaste young Chopin into a busy exercise in farce, with a full complement of deception and setbacks and misunderstandings. Celebrities of the Romantic movement—Delacroix, Musset, and Liszt among them—are put through their paces, along with George and Frédéric, in the salons and ballrooms and country houses of eighteen-thirties France; they issue florid declarations of love, hurl barbed epigrams at their rivals, challenge each other to duels, and, over all, make complete asses of themselves in their pursuit of the sublime. They're lively company. The historical figures in this movie are cartoons, but they're cartoons with recognizable human qualities, and the actors look as if they were having a wonderful time charging around in their period costumes. Hugh Grant's Chopin is a brilliant caricature of the Romantic ideal of the artist; he gives the character an air of befuddled unworldliness, and punctuates his readings with delicately timed tubercular coughs. Judy Davis plays Sand—a great actress in a great role. Davis makes Sand's passionate absurdities both funny and tremendously moving; this woman's willingness to embarrass herself seems a kind of romantic heroism. Also with Bernadette Peters, Julian Sands (as Liszt), Mandy Patinkin (as Musset), Emma Thompson, and Ralph Brown (as Delacroix). The costumes, by Jenny Beavan, are spectacular.—T.R. (5/6/91) (Village East Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . ¶ 57th St. Playhouse; through July 18.)

JUNGLE FEVER—The central event in Spike Lee's new movie is the love affair of Flipper (Wesley Snipes), a married African-American archi-

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

tect from Harlem, and Angie (Annabella Sciorra), an Italian-American office temp from Bensonhurst. Once Lee has set up the interracial relationship, he seems to lose interest in it; Flipper and Angie hold the stage only long enough to ignite the fears and hatreds of their communities, and when the fuse is lit their job is done. The movie's approach to its characters is stubbornly, and perversely, external; we never have the sense that we're getting inside anyone's skin (white or black). Everything in this picture is pitched at the level of public utterance. Lee's dialogue has the rhetorical tone of daytime-television talk shows; even in the most intense, emotionally charged domestic scenes, there's an alienating self-consciousness in the way the characters express themselves—they always look as if they had an ear cocked for audience response. This rhetorical barrage gives the picture a peculiar, halting rhythm: individual scenes have force and momentum, but the movie as a whole seems stalled, inert, uncertain where it's headed. And Lee's attitude toward interracial sex is shockingly puritanical; it's as if he were afraid that any hint of eroticism would constitute an endorsement of Flipper and Angie's affair. The scenes that deal with Flipper's crackhead brother, Gator (Samuel L. Jackson), have more energy than anything else in the picture; this subplot is tangential to the central theme, but it has some shape and dramatic coherence, and it actually builds to a climax. The interracial affair just dawdles to an underdramatized parting, and we feel nothing; emotionally, the movie has separated the lovers from each other, and from us, long before. Also with Lonette McKee, John Turturro, Anthony Quinn, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, and Frank Vincent. The inventive cinematography is by Ernest Dickerson. Some fine new songs by Stevie Wonder grace the soundtrack.—T.R. (6/17/91) (Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema....) ¶ National Twin; through July 18.)

KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS (1949)—This tart black comedy on the craving for social position and the art of murder has a brittle wit that came as a bit of a shock: such amoral lines were not generally spoken in forties movies. The film is heartless, and that is the secret of its elegance. Ninth in line to inherit a dukedom, the insouciant young hero (Dennis Price) systematically eliminates the intervening eight: a snob, a general, a photographer, an admiral, a suffragette, a clergyman, a banker, and the duke—all, by a casting stroke of genius, played by Alec Guinness. Secure in the knowledge that Guinness will return in another form, the audience suffers no regret as each abominable D'Ascayne is coolly dispatched. And as the murderer takes us further into his confidence with each foul deed, we positively look forward to his next success. With purring little Joan Greenwood as the minx-nemesis Sybilla, Valeria Hobson as the mix-minded Edith, Miles Maleson as the poetasting executioner. Based on the 1907 novel "Israel Rank," by Roy Horniman; adapted by Robert Hamer and John Dighton. Hamer directed.—P.K. (Newman Theatre; July 18.)

LES GIRLS (1957)—George Cukor directed this backstage-story musical (it's about a lawsuit over a former showgirl's memoirs), and the color consultant, George Hoyningen-Huene, gave it a classy look, but, with one exception, nobody connected with it was really at his best—not Gene Kelly, who was the star, nor the scenarist, John Patrick, and certainly not the choreographer, Jack Cole. (He hit rock bottom, with horrible quasi-cultured numbers.) Even the Cole Porter score is weak, and the whole picture is overproduced. The exception is the tall, blithe, and beautiful comedienne Kay Kendall, who does a funny, drunk "La Habanera" and has a number with Kelly in which she seems to be outdancing him and having an easy, amused time of it. Her role isn't large enough, though. The cast includes Henry Daniell, Taina Elg, Jacques Bergerac, Patrick Macnee, Leslie Phillips, and a bane of fifties movie musicals—the movie executives' idea of "adorable"—Mitzi Gaynor. From a story by

Vera Caspary.—P.K. (Public Theatre; July 18.)

THE MIRACLE—A beautiful new film by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Company of Wolves"). The setting is the coastal town of Bray, which is a short train ride from Dublin. Two teen-agers, Jimmy (Niall Byrne) and Rose (Beverly D'Angelo), spend most of their days wandering along the seaside promenade and making up stories about the people they run into: taking off from the human material that presents itself to them, the kids trade verbal riffs with the gleeful competitiveness of jamming musicians. One day, they spot a mysterious-looking blond woman (Beverly D'Angelo), and Jimmy becomes obsessed with her. He pursues her, in Bray and in Dublin, with an ardor that's partly sexual and partly something else—a feeling so muddled and inchoate that he can't put a name to it. Jordan turns this simple story into a clear, complete vision of experience: everything we see (and hear) flows into everything else, with an unpredictable rightness. His camera moves with a kind of meditative grace, framing and reframing the characters as if to capture the most delicate momentary changes in their relationships. The imagery draws on some pretty outré sources, and the climax—the miracle of the title—is a daring, flamboyant gesture. But Jordan manages to unite everything—the florid imagery, the dark emotional undertones, the flaky comedy, the astonishing physical beauty of the Irish seacoast—into a single, unbroken mood, a smooth



Niall Byrne and Beverly D'Angelo
in "The Miracle"

arc connecting the past and the present, the familiar and the unforeseen. Also with Donal McCann. The cinematography, by Philippe Rousselot, is extraordinary.—T.R. (7/15/91) (68th St. Playhouse.)

PICKUP ON SOUTH STREET (1953)—Richard Widmark as a scroungy petty gangster who sneaks a look into a woman's handbag, turns up some microfilm, and finds himself dealing with Communist agents. Samuel Fuller wrote the script (adapted from Dwight Taylor's story written for the screen) and directed, in his fast, flashy, essentially empty-minded style. The film isn't boring—there's always something going on—but you come away with nothing. (It isn't that Fuller's insensitive, exactly; it's that he's totally unconcerned with sensitivity—it would get in his way.) With Jean Peters, Thelma Ritter, Richard Kiley, Murvyn Vye, Milburn Stone, and George E. Stone.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; July 19–20.)

THE PIRATE (1948)—Judy Garland is a nineteenth-century maiden on a Caribbean island, dreaming of a famous pirate, and Gene Kelly, bouncing with élan in the manner of Fairbanks, is a travelling actor who pretends to be that pirate. This Vincente Minnelli musical, based on an S. N. Behrman play that the Lunts performed, is flamboyant in an innocent and lively way. Though it doesn't quite work, and it's all a bit broad, it doesn't sour in the memory. The Nicholas Brothers join Garland and Kelly in the celebrated "Be a Clown" number. The score is by Cole Porter. With Walter Slezak, Reginald Owen, Gladys Cooper, and George Zucco.—P.K. (Public Theatre; July 23–24.)

ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES—A dull, dutiful trek through the legend of the bandit of

Sherwood Forest, who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. Watching this picture is about as much fun as paying taxes, and far less stirring emotionally. We never feel that anyone involved in making this multimillion-dollar, two-hour-and-twenty-one-minute spectacle had any real affection for the story. The screenplay, by Pen Densham and John Watson, is a mishmash of halfhearted dramatizations of episodes from the legend and equally halfhearted nods to contemporary attitudes. If the movie had an exuberant spirit—as the 1938 "Adventures of Robin Hood" with Errol Flynn, had, in near-maniac overabundance—we'd be more inclined to overlook the script's incoherence. But there's not much joy in evidence here. The direction, by Kevin Reynolds, is stolid and impersonal, and Kevin Costner seems miscast as Robin: he's not a forceful enough actor for this role. The merry men are an unmemorable lot; even Little John (Nick Brimble) and Friar Tuck (Michael McShane) don't make strong impressions, because they haven't been given anything interesting to do. (In this version, Little John *loses* his famous battle with Robin in the stream.) The audience seems to perk up only when Alan Rickman, as the villainous Sheriff of Nottingham, is on the screen. He gives a florid, theatrical performance—there's real glee in his malice.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill Cinemas, Baronet, Coronet, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

THE ROCKETEER—Visually, this period adventure—about a daredevil pilot who finds a rocket pack that enables him to fly like Superman—is a creamy piece of kitsch. Its affectionate depiction of 1938 L.A. includes a goofy canine-shaped diner called the Bulldog Café and a glamorous Deco night spot. Jim Bissell's production design and Hiro Narita's cinematography bathe the sets and scenery in poster-art colors. But the lead characters and the story are too blandly, wholesomely retro. Bill Campbell is the all-American rocket man who ends up taking on the Nazis; Jennifer Connelly is his girlfriend, a Hollywood extra—a far cry from the nude model who was the female lead in Dave Stevens' original comic-book feature. It's not hard for a droll group of character actors to steal the Rocketeer's thunder. The standouts are Alan Arkin as the hero's wise, not-so-old engineer, Timothy Dalton as a Flynn-like swash-buckler (where was he when "Robin Hood" was cast?), and Terry O'Quinn as a sane Howard Hughes. Under Joe Johnston's clean, uninspired direction, the only set pieces that really take off are the Rocketeer's wild flights. They're more like the edgy joyrides in "The Right Stuff" than the computerized zigging and zagging we usually get from Industrial Light & Magic, the source of the special effects.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, and 23rd St. West Triplex....) ¶ Embassy 1; through July 18.... ¶ Embassy; starting July 19.)

SOAPDISH—The punchy, wisecracking love child of "Tootsie" and "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown." In the mad, mad, mad world of daytime television, on- and offscreen soap operas collide, creating a series of explosions building to one big bang. With Sally Field as the American Sweetheart who turns into the Queen of Misery, Whoopi Goldberg as her best friend and head writer, Cathy Moriarty as her rival, Robert Downey Jr., as her producer, and (best of all) Kevin Kline as her onetime lover and resurrected co-star, it's the kind of brash entertainment Hollywood isn't supposed to be able to make anymore—a whirling show-biz farce sped up for the era of instant infatuation. The characters have emotional-seepage problems: their competitive drives and backstage frustrations keep leaking into their jobs. Kline, in his most skillful and risible screen performance yet, has an additional dilemma—he can't locate any unrehearsed feelings. The movie's director, Michael Hoffman, brings out the jester in everyone; the editor, Garth Craven, cuts for maximum snap. And the screenwriters, Andrew Bergman and Robert Harling, wring fun out of fustian and keep the shallow characters on the run. Daytime TV is thought to be too easy to lampoon. But through a combination of lowdown parody and soapsmanship, Hoffman and company satirize the

seemingly unsatirizable.—M.S. (Quad Cinema, Loews Festival, and Loews Paramount.)

THELMA & LOUISE—The heroines, played by Geena Davis (Thelma) and Susan Sarandon (Louise), are a couple of Arkansas women who set out for a weekend in the mountains and wind up speeding through the Southwest, on the run from the law. (Louise has murdered a man who tried to rape Thelma in a roadhouse parking lot.) The movie, written by Callie Khouri and directed by Ridley Scott, is designed to keep pushing the women farther and farther out there—past the point of no return, into the vanishing point of a vast Western landscape, and, finally, over the edge of the world. It's a pretty shameless outlaw fantasy; the feminist justification that the script provides for the heroines' behavior doesn't make their actions any less preposterous. But you can recognize the crudeness of the movie's narrative devices and still have an awfully good time. There's an exhilarating ease and intuitiveness in the way Davis and Sarandon work together, and the camera lingers on them as if it couldn't get enough of them. Scott's direction gives the story a pleasantly dreamy quality: when Thelma and Louise are on the road, the movie has the look of a mirage, a jewelled shimmer that keeps us half hypnotized. He turns Davis and Sarandon into outlaw princesses, and they're so vivid and likable that they carry us past the plot's most obvious contrivances; a little disbelief seems a small price to pay for being allowed to remain in their company.—T.R. (6/3/91) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . Murray Hill Cinemas, and Embassy; through July 18.)

TRUTH OR DARE—Madonna was at her best on "Saturday Night Live," when she played herself for laughs as a pop temptress who puts out for her fans. But in this maddeningly prolonged, self-important, semi-documentary backstage look at her Blond Ambition tour, she plays not just for laughs but for shocks, tears, leers, and, most of all, for adoration. Her way of being truthful and daring is to allow the young director, Alek Keshishian, to depict her as a twenty-four-hour diva who mothers her backup performers and as a scantily clad Statue of Liberty standing up for free expression. The bits of her stage show (shot in 35-mm. color; the rest is in 16-mm. black-and-white) seem ludicrous when she describes them as part of "an emotional journey." The movie has been so over-reported that the celebrity bits with Warren Beatty, Kevin Costner, and Sandra Bernhard, and the friction among members of Madonna's biological and stage families, come off as the retold story. There's no jolt left to seeing Madonna do what you've already read about. The movie is all calculation, no revelation—unless you count the calculation itself as a revelation.—M.S. (Loews Village Theatre VII, Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

WHAT ABOUT BOB?—As the character before the question mark—a multiphobic personality looking for a family—Bill Murray is touched not just with an armada of fears and tics but also with comic genius. Bob is a psychiatrist's nightmare, an achingly needy yet cunning patient, and Dr. Leo Marvin (Richard Dreyfuss) is the shrink he's currently haunting, a self-centered psychobabbler concerned with going on vacation and promoting his new book, "Baby Steps." Dreyfuss gives a shrewd, felicitous performance; he knows how to express a control freak's stroked ego with the merest quarter-smile. But the movie is shaped to redeem Bob and to give Leo his comeuppance, reducing Dreyfuss to shrieking fits. Tom Schulman's script (from a story by Alvin Sargent and Laura Ziskin) and Frank Oz's direction lack any sustained tone, including muscle tone. When Bob starts bonding with Leo's kids (Charlie Korsmo, Kathryn Erbe) and wife (Julie Hagerty), Murray's instinctive iconoclasm is all that keeps the film from going completely sentimental and flabby. The way Murray plays Bob, he embodies the ages of man—negatively. He can be alarmingly infantile and pathetically decrepit, and still be adept at getting what he wants. Underneath the gloss of good feeling, Murray conveys the selfishness within this basket case. Murray and Dreyfuss (and the final plot twist) manage to put across the essence of Bob and Leo's relationship: a clash of egomaniacs.—M.S. (8th St. Playhouse, and Cinema 3.)



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WE were in Nebraska City, Nebraska, on the morning of the Fourth of July, and we had breakfast at the McDonald's on Highway 75. McDonald's was offering all its customers lengths of yellow plastic ribbon from a big spool. We accepted a modest four feet and, not quite sure what to do with it, tossed it in the back seat of our rented car before heading east.

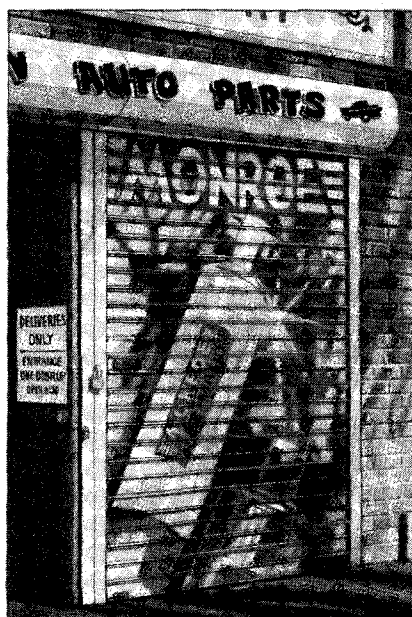
The first place we stopped—in the middle of southwest Iowa's beautiful farm country—was the Sportsman's Park picnic grounds, in Shenandoah. We were too late for the Lions Club children's-pet show, but the little flea market at the old train depot was in full swing. Among the usual displays of secondhand books and vintage salt and pepper shakers was a card table covered with novelty license plates. (One we liked a lot said "If the trailer's rockin', don't come knockin'.") Down a dirt path, at the high-school utility team's dunk tank, a relaxed guy, maybe in his forties, was sitting on a kind of trapdoor above a waist-deep pool of water. A boy of about ten reared back and pitched a baseball at a target to the left of the tank, and, to everyone's delight (and the guy's evident surprise), the ball hit the bull's-eye, and the guy was dumped into the water. He was the high-school principal, it turned out. Farther down the path, meanwhile, younger kids were flinging wet sponges at the head of a willing adult victim for a quarter a throw—the money earmarked for charity. Nearby, in Shenandoah's spacious old function hall, about thirty of the townspeople's favorite quilts were on display. Some were timeworn family heirlooms; some were new. When the woman in charge gave

us a slip of paper on which to vote for our favorite, we had a hard time choosing between a delicate butterfly quilt a century old, a vibrant yellow-and-orange sunburst from the forties, and a stylish geometric pattern, only twenty years old, called Levitation. (We ruled out one embroidered with celebrity signatures, including Nanette Fabray's and Mister T's.)

Driving north, we stopped at a café in Avoca for a lunch of the local specialty—pork-tenderloin sandwiches—and were about the last customers to be served, because the kitchen was closing at one-forty-five to allow everyone to go outside and see or be seen in the town's parade. It was hot, so people were clustered in the shade of the big trees along the main street, sitting in folding chairs or on the grass. Overhead, a single-engine plane circled, trailing a banner that said "God Bless America." When the parade arrived in town from the fairgrounds nearby, Robert Darrah, C.P.A., narrating the

event over a loudspeaker, introduced members of the local American Legion, who were riding on the back of a flatbed truck while one of the Legionnaires played "America the Beautiful" on a trumpet. At the head of the procession was half of the police force, Dean Henning. Then came this year's grand marshals, Lloyd and Gladys Petersen, waving to their friends and neighbors from the back seat of an aqua Cadillac convertible. They were followed by the East Pottawattamie county-fair queen and her attendants, on the back of a pickup truck; by Shriners in fezzes, on a float with a fur buffalo; and by a modest selection of fire trucks. The parade also included people who marched or drove just because they had something good to show: a Redi-Mix concrete truck; a 1979 Thunderbird ("The Last of the Big T-Birds"); a tractor from Stempel Implement, Inc.; Schroeder's "Honey Wagon" (a septic-tank truck); a go-kart driven by a tiny boy in an Uncle Sam hat; a Chevrolet Bel Air towing an old red Coke machine; an exquisitely waxed 1986 Camaro; and a miniature wagon pulled by a team of six ponies on behalf of Knutson's Funeral Home ("Serving Avoca, Hancock, Minden, Shelby, and Walnut").

The watching grownups mostly sat in their chairs, fanned themselves, sipped iced drinks from coolers, and applauded. Avoca's kids, though, kept darting off the grass verge into the street, because people in just about every passing vehicle were flinging handfuls of penny candy their way. One little boy was dressed in a playsuit of military camouflage; that was the sole military note in the whole parade except for the Legionnaires. In fact, from the time we left McDonald's until we settled into our motel in Des



Moines, after sunset, we saw miles of red-white-and-blue bunting and multitudes of American flags—outside official buildings and private homes, and in a dozen little cemeteries by the side of the road—but not a single yellow ribbon tied to a car, to an old oak tree, or to anything else. Southwest Iowa was celebrating the Fourth with plenty of patriotism but with no reference that we could see to Operation Desert Storm.

Champion

THE other day, we told a young jazz singer that we were looking into the career of Gene Autry, who, at eighty-three, had just won the 1991 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame. “Gene Autry!” she said. “Why, he must have invented country.” Then she smiled and said, “What do you get when you play country music backward? You get your dog back, you get your car back, and you get your wife back.”

In the musical world of Gene Autry, there are no cars, dogs, or wives. Sometimes there aren’t even girlfriends. (We’re thinking of songs like the one starting “There ain’t no lady gonna break my heart as long as I’ve got my horse.”) The love songs in the Autry repertory usually don’t speak *about* women; they speak *directly* to them. That bracing directness, couched in gentle, almost fatherly language, is the romance. The titles say it all: “There’s a New Moon Over My Shoulder (And an old love still in my heart),” “Have I Told You Lately That I Love You,” “Be Honest with Me,” “It Makes No Difference Now.” Furthermore, Mr. Autry delivered his songs in a voice that played straight with you. No one seems to have ever been willing to classify it in a conventional way, as tenor, baritone, or bass. (Fielding the question himself, Mr. Autry once called it “cowboy.”) Although in his youth Mr. Autry was capable of some virtuoso yodelling, as a singer he really had little range. But at his peak he also had very little vibrato. Every note was squarely attacked and unsentimentally released. Even when he sang the blues, he didn’t bend notes. Mr. Autry sang the way adults imagine that children would sing in some ideal choir. When he told you how he felt, you trusted

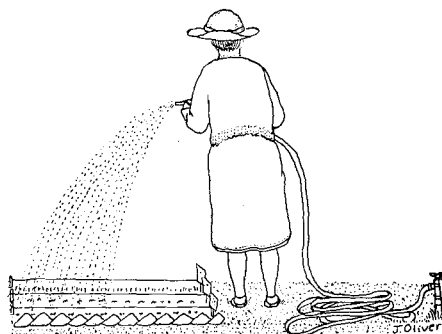
him. So did your friends. During the decade from 1935 to 1945, Mr. Autry received about a thousand fan letters a day, most of them from women.

A few weeks ago, we phoned Mr. Autry at his hotel, in Palm Springs, California, to ask him about his singing and songwriting. Right off, he told us that his baseball team, the California Angels, now takes up much more of his time than music does, but after a while he confided that he is working on a new Christmas song. We asked him how he works, and he said that, although he can read music a little, he has never learned to write it. “I put the tune down on a tape or cut it on a record, and then someone else writes it down,” he said. We asked him what kinds of songs he liked to listen to. He mentioned the songs of Irving Berlin, Walter Donaldson, and Hoagy Carmichael. “I like practically all good songs, especially songs with a story,” he said. “When I was recording, I used to like ballads most of all.” After a pause, he added, “Ideas come to you in strange ways. Once, I was working on a radio session in Chicago. Some woman kept writing me letters at that time. In one she told me a story of how she’d been out walking at night, and the stars were shining bright, and then she said, ‘But you’re the only star in my blue heaven.’” Mr. Autry chuckled. “‘You’re the Only Star in My Blue Heaven’ was a big hit for me,” he said.

During his performing career, which began in the late twenties and stretched into the early sixties, Gene Autry recorded more than six hundred songs, and he wrote or collaborated on some two hundred of them. His renditions of many songs turned them into standards, including numbers about the pleasures of cowboy independence (like “Don’t Fence Me In”) and about the landscape and lore of the West (like “Deep in the Heart of Texas,” Mr.

Autry’s native state). In 1933, he received the first gold record ever awarded, for “That Silver Haired Daddy of Mine,” which he wrote with Jimmy Long (whose niece he had married the year before). His other gold records include “Tumbling Tumbleweeds”; his theme song, “Back in the Saddle Again” (which he also collaborated on); “You Are My Sunshine”; “South of the Border”; and “Mexicali Rose.” During the late forties and the fifties, Mr. Autry recorded several very successful songs for children. “Here Comes Santa Claus” and “Peter Cottontail” went platinum. “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” has sold twenty-five million copies, which is more than any other Christmas song except “White Christmas.”

Throughout Mr. Autry’s sixty-two years in the entertainment business, one thing that has set him apart from many Hollywood stars is that he has always played himself, and another is that his has been a self unclouded by mixed motives, or even by much gossip. The name of the characters he played on his radio and television shows and in nearly all his movies was Gene Autry. In these movies—there were almost a hundred of them—he was always the same courteous, smiling, upstanding, gun-wise, girl-shy boy next door in a white hat, with a song breaking from his lips. There was a sweetness and a courtliness to Mr. Autry’s manner which, along with his lanky physique, gave him a universal appeal. “Gene Autry has the capacity to write a song that almost sounds like a folk song, something you seem to have known before you’ve heard it,” the composer Morton Gould—the current president of ASCAP, which sponsors the Songwriters Hall of Fame—said recently in a conversation with us. Mr. Gould also said, “Autry has a direct simplicity of expression, quality, and character that reaches out to a lot of people. A song can have great sophistication and character, but not necessarily in that universal sense. Now, Irving Berlin had that universality also, and, like Autry, he couldn’t write down music. It’s an interesting question whether the universal quality of their songs is connected to their lack of formal musicianship. To find an answer you’d have to recycle an Autry or a Berlin and put him, young, into Juilliard—put him through the



intellectual's self-conscious process. Would the music still come out instinctively? And what is it that makes somebody like Autry or Berlin—who comes with no musical background, no cosmetic craftsmanship—able to produce music and lyrics both? I suppose that some people might say their songs should have to be compared to lieder, but I think the measure should be in their own genius."

The ceremony for the Hall of Fame awards, at the New York Hilton, was lively but also long, and Mr. Autry didn't step up to the stage to receive his plaque until well after 11 P.M. His presenter was Mr. Gould. "Good morning," Mr. Gould said to the crowd as midnight approached. "The reason for my being here is more logical than you might think. Gene Autry represents the great outdoors, and I represent the great indoors. I avoid going outside whenever possible." Mr. Gould looked down at some papers, then continued, "It says here that he owns the California Angels, among other things. I'm not a sports fan. That might be a religious order. In any case, whatever it is he owns, he owns it. Ladies and gentlemen, Gene Autry."

Mr. Autry is famous for his Western dress. On this black-tie occasion, he wore a tuxedo whose jacket had an undulating, cowboy-style yoke. His footgear was a pair of cowboy boots made from white ostrich leather. As the crowd gave him a standing ovation, he doffed his white Stetson and posed with Mr. Gould for some photographs. Then he advanced to the lectern for a short speech. "This is really one of the happiest evenings that I have had in a long, long time," Mr. Autry said softly. "In my early days of coming to New York, I used to look forward to putting on my rodeo at Madison Square Garden, and to my friendship with so many fine fans. In fact, to show you my love for New York, one of my competitors is here tonight—Mr. Frank Cashen, vice-president of the Mets. I am hoping that the Mets and the Angels will meet in the World Series and that I can kick the hell out of him."

Time Operations

IN Münster, Germany, where Bob Lachnit was born, in 1928, people paid attention to public clocks. There



"Witness will confine herself to answering counsel's questions, and refrain from giving opinions as to constitutionality and the like."

is a clock in nearly every church tower in Münster. Münsterians set their watches by their clocks. Here in New York, where Lachnit lives now, people who are serious about time set their watches by the radio or by the phone or, in a pinch, by digital clocks; rarely will a New Yorker trust a public clock that has hands on it. As a rule, New Yorkers want two things from their public clocks—size and wattage. "Here, you know, you ask people what's a great clock in this city, and they say, 'Oh, Maxwell House clock is a great clock,'" Mr. Lachnit said recently. "It's no great clock, I think. It is the biggest clock, sure, and the brightest. But I think it is like a billboard."

Mr. Lachnit is the keeper of the four-faced clock on the Metropolitan Life Insurance Tower, on Madison Square, which horologists judge to be one of the finest public clocks in the city. He is also responsible for the tower chimes, which play a measure from Handel's "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth" every quarter of an hour from eight in the morning to eight at night, though sometimes he takes pity on the occupants of the high rise at Broadway and Twenty-third

and turns the chimes off early. Mr. Lachnit believes that the tower clock is as accurate as any in the city. It gains or loses between seventeen and twenty seconds a day, depending on the temperature. (Hot days expand the pendulum, making the clock run faster; cold days shrink it.) On a really windy day, the minute hand on one or another of the clock faces—it's seventeen and a half feet long, and weighs half a ton—may blow a minute beyond the correct time, in which case Mr. Lachnit turns a crank in his workroom, to reset it. His workroom, conveniently situated directly behind the south clock face, is a small rectangular space richly endowed with clocks—English skeleton clocks, French mantel clocks, table clocks, bracket clocks, regulator clocks, alarm clocks, a cuckoo clock. The air vibrates with the whirring of the tower clock's gears, which are at the far end of the room. On warm days, Mr. Lachnit opens his porthole, a circular iron panel in the center of the clock face. His view is of the base of the clock hands, with slivers of Wall Street skyscrapers beyond.

Mr. Lachnit's grandfather was a clockmaker, his great-grandfather was

a clockmaker, and he himself became a clockmaker's apprentice at age fourteen. Clocks are the dominant passion of his life. As Mechanic in Charge of Time Operations for the Home Office, he is responsible for every one of more than eighteen hundred clocks. "We got Howard clocks, Chelsea clocks, French clocks in the lawyers' offices, an English clock for the doctor," he says. "We got the small table clocks for the junior vice-presidents and the big grandfather clock for the president." On rare occasions, Mr. Lachnit makes clocks for senior executives. In a sense, the very principles upon which Met Life is founded—precision, efficiency, dependability—fall within Mr. Lachnit's bailiwick, but he does not encourage this kind of speculation. "All I say is we got the best damn clocks in the world" is his position.

Mr. Lachnit, who is in his twenty-second year with Met Life, is a bachelor, and lives alone in an apartment in Bay Ridge. He has a round, Kissingeresque face, wavy gray hair, a meaty neck, and shoulders stooped from years of fiddling with clockworks. Generally, he arrives at the Met Life Tower at six in the morning. The first thing he does is obtain the exact time. In the old days, the Naval Observatory supplied Met Life with the time—at noon, a pip was broadcast over a ticker-tape machine in the basement—but now Mr. Lachnit just calls 976-1616. He carefully transfers this information to his Omega wristwatch and then, with only slightly less solemnity than an Olympic torchbearer in possession of the eternal flame, carries the exact time forth to all corners of the home office, from the lowliest time-stamp clock in the basement to the splendid mercury-filled-pendulum clock in the corporate boardroom, by which the directors measure their day. He stops at the mas-

ter clock, in the basement, which controls about nine hundred wall and ceiling clocks—which, in turn, regulate the comings and goings of most of the eight thousand people who work in the home office. Today, the master clock is six seconds fast. When he has corrected it, he heads through the labyrinth of basement corridors, passing cooks, waiters, butchers, carpenters, laundrymen, and elevator men, who all seem to know him, and whose affection for him perpetually threatens the swift completion of his rounds. "Yo, Bob," he hears, and "Bob, what's up?" and "Heyyyy, Bobbaay." He bestows the same crisp hello and half salute on everyone, and in reply to more importunate greetings—"Big Bob, where ya headed?"—he will say what sounds like "I go do that thing over there," pointing his finger, chopping with his hand, and hurrying on his way. Finally, in the machine shop, a heavyset man manages to drape an arm around Mr. Lachnit's shoulders and stop his progress. The man sighs heavily. "Bobby, Bobby," he says.

Mr. Lachnit, squirming a little, gives him a nod. "So! You are well?"

The man sighs again. "Not so good, Bobby, not so good. I fear my time is getting short."

"Ach!" Mr. Lachnit says impatiently. "That I cannot help."

Big

THERE are other big chairs making the rounds these days, but Bob Silverstein's Big Chair is something a little different. For one thing, Bob Silverstein's Big Chair comes apart. This was Bob's idea. No one else has had this idea. The other big chairs are merely big, whereas Bob's Big Chair is big-plus-transportable—meaning that it can be broken down into four separate, easily moved pieces. The other things that make it different are—well, quite frankly, Bob would rather not say. The line of work Bob Silverstein is in—novelty photo opportunities for street fairs and corporate functions—thrives on technical innovation and conceptual ingenuity, and maintaining

these requires an uncommon degree of confidentiality, and it just so happens that Bob Silverstein has got big in the novelty-photo business by being uncommonly confidential.

The exact dimensions of Mr. Silverstein's Big Chair are really nobody's damn beeswax, but if you go to any of the street festivals where the Big Chair is showing up this summer you can get a good unauthorized look at it for yourself. The Big Chair is a Colonial-style wing chair with roll arms and a dust ruffle; it's upholstered in nubby blue-and-brown plaid fabric; and it's extremely large. The dimensions—well, forget about getting specific, but Mr. Silverstein will allow that the chair might possibly be from three and a half to four times as big as a normal chair. The Big Chair's purpose is



"How many times have I asked you not to discuss stubbornly high interest rates in front of the children?"

to make people sitting in it look unbelievably small when Bob takes their picture. The picture goes into a cardboard frame and then goes home with the back-to-normal-size people. Let's say, for instance, that the Big Chair could make someone sitting in it look from three and a half to four times as small as normal. Maybe even smaller. Whatever. A lot of people can fit into the Big Chair for group photos. Maximum capacity is undoubtedly quite a large number. It's maybe a number divisible by five, maybe not. It might be around eight or so.

A certain weekend some time ago, the Big Chair was set up at the Christopher Street Fair, and Bob Silverstein was working the booth. Mr. Silverstein is a stocky man with short sandy hair, a lot of freckles, muscular forearms, and a wide-open, expressive, totally revealing face. If you frequent street festivals in New York or in various other places, such as certain other states nearby—no names, no way—you may have seen him around. He's been doing the Big Chair for two years. Before that, he had a booth where you could be photographed with life-size cutouts—Ronald Reagan, the Pope, Hulk Hogan, and twenty-two other celebrities, all of whom he threw in the trash a few days before coming to the Christopher Street Fair, because, as far as he's concerned, cutouts are totally over. Mr. Silverstein figures that the Big Chair has one more season and then it's going in the trash, too. In the meantime, he's working on something else—something big in the business sense of big rather than big in the Big Chair sense of big, which he will be introducing as soon as the Big Chair is no longer big in the business sense of big. Here's a crazy idea: How about Mr. Silverstein's giving a little hint about this new project? "Are you totally kidding?" Mr. Silverstein said when he heard this crazy idea. "No, thanks. I have no plans to divulge anything about it at this time. When it's ready, you'll know about it, believe me."

Until this next big idea is ready for unveiling, Mr. Silverstein is keeping busy with the Big Chair. How busy? This, too, is the sort of non-public information that Mr. Silverstein will not be divulging at this time—or any time soon, for that matter—because indiscreet divulging is exactly how a



"I don't see anyone breaking a leg to get a video of this."

big street-fair-booth thing goes from being big to being in the trash. In any case, Mr. Silverstein's Big Chair business card says "Big Chair Photo: Have the Chair at Your Affair." These affairs could be Bar Mitzvahs, sweet-sixteen parties, or other events that are strictly the private concern of the individuals involved, and absolutely no one else's, or they could be corporate in nature. "Not to mention any names, but take a bank, for instance—a particular bank might call and say they are having some of their employees, such as, say, their head tellers and their managers, at a gathering," Mr. Silverstein said. As he was saying this, he was assisting a couple in matching Gay Pride T-shirts into the Big Chair and surrounding them with Big Chair props—a giant pink baby bottle, a giant blue baby bottle, and a much-larger-than-life coloring book. "They will have the employees at a particular hotel, and they will contract with us to take a set number of photos," Mr. Silverstein went on. "By the way, I also have a robot, Zoniff the Robot, who can also be hired for corporate events." Interrupting himself, he asked the couple if they wanted the giant beer bottle in the Big Chair with them, too. "No, thanks," the larger of them responded. "We don't want the beer bottle. We

want to look like little tiny babies."

It occurred to us that there might be more than one Bob Silverstein Big Chair, so that one could be dispatched to a corporate event while another might be at, say, the Italian Festival at Steeplechase Park. O.K.—just as a for instance, then, approximately how many Bob Silverstein Big Chairs might there be in existence in the known universe at this particular point in time?

"A few," Mr. Silverstein answered. "A couple. There are several. Some. Hey—who, exactly, needs to know?"

Next question: Why do people like the Big Chair, really?

"I can't say," Mr. Silverstein said. "They just love it. Right now, it's in. It's a fun idea."

A line was forming at the Big Chair booth. At the head of the line was a group of women wearing Lycra tank tops, faded bluejeans, and studded dog collars.

"Nice fabric," one of the women said to Mr. Silverstein as she climbed up to the chair. "Did you make this chair?"

"I made the chair," he said. "I conferred with an upholsterer on the fabric."

"It's a really big chair," she said. "That's what everyone says," he said.

NAVIGATORS

THERE are four of us children, three boys and a girl, and—with the possible exception of my sister—we've chosen to align ourselves, in spirit and other places where it counts, with our father's side of the family: his ancestry, East Coast origins, and, certainly, the idea of his money. We're Knowleses, and Knowleses in one form or another have been around New England forever, Father often implied. We have their good looks—square chin, arrowhead nose, and long, thin mouth—and woody bits and patches of their original land, as well as their various susceptibilities: heart disease, alcoholism, and drowning. (Our Knowles ancestors, for all their love of sailing and water, were crude, confused sailors; you can't sail a boat very smartly when you're stoned.)

To my brother Sam, siding with Father's family also came to mean becoming—unlike Father—a first-class snob. Sam wasn't a particularly snobby or class-conscious kid; I remember him as heavy, quiet, secretive, overly virtuous, and concerned mostly, intently, with being liked. He was the only one of us who showed practically no interest in sports, especially those played in summer, when a boy might feel compelled to take off his shirt and bare his chest, but what I found most curious was Sam's peculiar mixture of self-consciousness and extreme vanity. At the age of eight he was discovered with his hand laced cautiously inside the fingers of another boy, a scared stranger seated beside him at the movies, and the incident made Mother worry that he might be homosexual. While we—his brothers and sister, at least—found nothing wrong, or fearful, in this prospect, when Sam was a teen-ager Mother began encour-

aging all her friends to send their nieces his way. At one point, it seemed to me, Sam was on the receiving end of two or three nieces a month; nothing came of any of these introductions, except that these girls occasionally, overlapping, got to meet one another. At Columbia, Sam got one ear pierced, joined a band, grew his hair to his shoulders, and became involved with a flamboyant, actorish crowd, and for a while he seemed to delight in bringing home classmates—college activists, lesbians with shaved heads (surprisingly gentle women), the obese, stuttering son of a Las Vegas loan shark—who couldn't have shocked more if they'd been briefed beforehand.

Yet sometime during his sophomore year Sam underwent a transformation: he lost forty pounds, quit the band, took up squash, running, smoking, and drinking. The earring went into storage, as did most of his old friends. He joined the preppiest fraternity on campus, started spending weekends at the

second and third houses of his new fratmates, and casually declared an interest in the music of Cole Porter, racing (sailboats), and the fluctuations of the bond market, these last two especially endearing him to Father. The slim, brown, scrubbed, and rather similar-looking girls he brought home on weekends all had money, good-background-right-schools, or both—girls who kept brightly colored Rabbits or Hondas in the city, front seats strewn with cassettes and Velamints wrappers. ("Her mother's a ———," Sam would hot-whisper to me. "Her father's the head of ———; he also owns ———; gave me keys to his place in ———, and he told me"—us, whatever—"I can use it anytime.") Four years ago, he landed a job at a small paperback press—a fitting profession for him, given people's general perception that editorial assistants can't possibly get along on a publisher's paycheck and must undoubtedly have another source of income, which Sam does. What he'd really like to do, though, I think, is become famous—

not through any discipline or hard work but through sheer talent and the sheer spectacle of personality. The question of his ever marrying, settling down, or, for that matter, leaving New York no longer comes up.

MOTHER had arranged the July Fourth weekend well in advance, and was looking forward to having her whole family around. Although Father died on a cool, astonishingly blue-eyed morning one year ago this September, the long weekend of the Fourth was more convenient for all the members of the family, and since most of us were coming in from a fair distance—my sister, Sarah, from Portland, Oregon; my wife, Caroline, and I from the Midwest; my older brother, Jay, with his



"Don't forget—grubs, mites, worms. I want this to be a very special evening."

wife and their child, from Ipswich; Sam from New York City—the weekend appeared to afford us an ideal opportunity to commemorate the anniversary of my father's death in whichever way we agreed upon and also the rare chance to spend some time with each other.

I'd picked Sam up at Logan Airport. There were connecting buses he might have taken that would have deposited him much nearer the island, but over the phone he reminded me of the times he'd put aside important things he was doing and come to collect me at train stations, bus depots, shuttle terminals, or familiar family drop-off points, such as the Howard Johnson's that stands halfway between our old house and the airport.

"I dread this weekend, Jam," he told me as we drove. He was using a childhood nickname of mine, which Sarah says comes from red pajamas I wore as a kid. But Mother swears it has to do with my young love of the beach plums that looped in broken tangles along the fences lining our road and that she occasionally pulverized into strange-tasting jams. "I don't even *want* to come. What are we going to do, anyway? Have some little creepy ballgame-like moment of silence? Lower a flag? Father would *hate* that."

Sam laughed uncomfortably and proceeded, as though it pained him to bring up so sensitive a topic, to stumble over his next idea: that patriotism—specifically, the attention that a particular person or family pays to national holidays—is a stonily reliable class indicator, and so it followed that, being Knowleses and all, we didn't, *wouldn't*, care anything about ceremony, particularly as it related to death and Independence Day. We were above all that. Hell, we didn't even own a flag.

MOTHER was out in the garden, yanking up parsley, when we pulled in to the driveway, and as she strode across the front lawn with one bony, dirt-stained hand raised in greeting I marvelled at how youthful she



"My hair has been a great source of comfort to me."

looked. Mother leads, I believe, a fairly isolated life, though, like most people who live on the island year-round (she sold the other house, in Boston, six months ago), she'll tell you that just the opposite is true, that it's hard for her to capture a moment to herself. Mother gardens ("violently" is the term she uses), runs a contemporary-reading group, works part-time at the local gift shop, and, all of us suspect, drinks a great deal.

"Darlings!" Mother exclaimed when we got out of the car and embraced, "Isn't this serendipitous? Jay came thirty minutes ago, Doll is out to *here*"—she held her hands a foot away from her stomach—"your beautiful sister's down taking a swim, though the water's *bone*-chilling. She's made Margaritas in the blender for everybody, the table's set, and—"

With the exception of Jay, who's a health freak, our family drinks a great deal when we're at home—most of us not slyly but quite out in the open. My wife, who is a psychologist and comes from a family of nondrinkers, is continually startled by the amounts of beer and wine we can put away, and by how offhandedly we include the Soave with

the suntan oil, the thermos of gin with the centerboard and jib. Sam, on the other hand, tends to sneak the stuff, his pleasure, I believe, deriving less from getting drunk than from the thrill of putting one over on his family. Last Christmas Eve, Jay walked into the pantry as Sam was pouring a stream of vodka into a Diet Coke can; it was evident that Sam was making ready to amble out into the living room, casual as a doe, in imitation of a soda-drinking teetotaler. "It's cocktail hour *somewhere* in the world," Father, a gentle, rigid, unathletic, highly sociable man, used to joke.

"Be careful, you guys," Mother warns us now and then. "Don't forget your great-great-great-grandfather Nehemiah." (He was pie-eyed, not to mention syphilitic, when he was crushed under the wheels of his own private train.)

At age seventy-three, Mother is an elusive woman. She appears fragile to most people, yet she's stronger, and more resilient, than I think she would ever care to admit. The texture of her social past—the Chapin School, Sarah Lawrence, a career in interior design, abandoned for her marriage—has al-

ways absorbed her, but never more so than in the time since Father died. Nowadays, she displays an obvious, dark-eyed pleasure in recalling the golden men and women—the Jocks, Piesies, Bunnies, the women who “were” Hallowells, Phippses, Forbeses—with whom she and Father crossed paths/consorted/travelled/drank/quarrelled/reconciled, people whom she now says they loved.

Yet despite her nostalgia for more nearly perfect, familiar decades, an unfamiliar hardness has crept into Mother’s manner. Sarah pointed out that sometime during the past year she’d even concocted a new laugh: rough, m.c.-jovial, an edgy, mechanical chuckle—a laugh that comes not from a heart we recognize but from a distant place that repels both intimacy and further interrogation. While Mother is a naturally witty woman, this laugh has little in common with happiness, and I cringe whenever I hear it.

“MY bird feeder’s missing,” Mother said. Her cigarette was smoking beside her in an ashtray made out of a quahog flap. Her words landed like an accusation, but then her voice softened. “I think raccoons must have rolled it down into the marsh. I heard screams last night, and I thought immediately, Cats. But now the feeder’s gone. Disappeared.”

On the porch, for the benefit of his son, Jay had shaken lighter fluid over the coals and was igniting them, then stepping back as the flames shot up and flowered around the wet, black pan; he tore off and struck the matches with the fingers of one hand—a trick he knows. His four-year-old, Jay, Jr.—whom all of us unimaginatively call J.J. for short—was swinging in the oversized white hammock not fifteen feet from the grill, snapping out little-man orders, which Jay was following conscientiously, though with a slight frown on his mouth. J.J. is a bright, blond child who has his parents’ good looks (Sam’s nickname for him is Perfect, though he’s never used it in front of Jay or his wife; alone with J.J., however, I’ve seen him squat and beckon, heard him call, “Come here, Perfect. Come to Sam,” and the poor kid obeys), and Mother dotes on him. On the porch step a platterful of raw steaks lay oiled in readiness, along

NORTH FORK

The humped, half-subterranean
potato barns, the tubers
like grown stones, wet meat
from underground a bused-in,
moved-on proletariat once
stooped for, where Paumanok’s
outwash plain, debris of glaciers,
frays to a fishtail,

now give place to grapevines,
their tendency to ramble
and run on, to run to foliage
curbed, pruned, trained
into another monoculture—row
after profitable row
on acre after acre, whole landscapes
strung like a zither

where juniper and honeysuckle,
bayberry, Virginia creeper,
goldenrod and poison ivy would
have rioted, the wetlands

glistening at the margin, the reed-
bed plumes, the groundsel’s
tide-line windrows a patina of
perpetual motion:

here where unrest is everything,
where driven human
diligence alone could, now or ever,
undo the uninstructed
thicketing of what keeps happening
for no human reason,
one comes upon this leeward, mowed
and tended pocket,

last resting place of slaves, each
grave marked by a boulder
hardly more than a potato’s size,
unnamed but as dependents of
Seth Tuthill and his wife, Maria, who
chose finally to lie here
with their sometime chattels,
and whose memory, too, is now
worn down to stone.

—AMY CLAMPITT

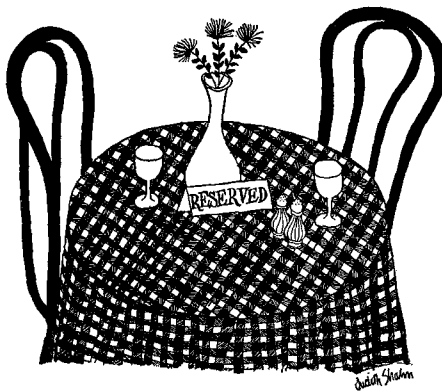
with tongs, spatula, a big fork, baster, and mitts in the shapes of crocodile mouths and lobster claws.

“Oh, will you cut it out, Jay,” Doll said to my brother, who’d thrown another match down onto the coals. “Don’t blame me if you end up in some hospital. And don’t expect me to come visit you there, either.”

My sister-in-law is a former Louisville deb, and Doll is her actual name, though at first none of us were able to pronounce it with anything other than a cumbrous, clubfooted irony. Our family is big on nicknames, but there was no way we could improve on the sheer beauty-pageant weirdness of “Doll,” and so we respectfully backed off. She’s an intelligent, acerbic, fiercely loyal woman, with flashing teeth and translucent, astonishingly white skin—you can see the light wiring of blue

veins, another world, below it—and her hair is famous in the family for its length (it continues down her back, past her bottom, grazing the backs of her knees, practically; she usually keeps it tied up in a thick braid, whose weight could knock a man out), and at the time she was seven months pregnant. Together, she and my brother—New England golden boy meets ex-Southern deb, or, as Sam refers to them, the Lug and the Teensy-Weensy White Girl—are a spectacular couple: gorgeous-looking—what Sam calls “deeply sporty,” each one as popular as the other, the envy of their friends, or so we all imagine; and they evoke in me a childish romanticism I didn’t think it possible to feel for members of my own family.

“Have you ever had okra?” Sarah threw out. When no one answered, she added, “It’s foul. It’s like eating algae. Or peat moss or something.” Back from the beach, her hair wet-combed, she sat hunched on the top porch step, an empty grocery bag between her knees, coolly stripping silk off the corn and chucking the ears into a colander—a ghost version of my father. My sister, a tall, no-nonsense girl, likes to think of herself as a semi-expert on the Deep South; she transferred to Vanderbilt from Mount



Holyoke after discovering that practically everyone on her dormitory floor was bulimic.

Sam ignored her; in his opinion, Sarah, in fleeing New England first for the mid-South and then for the Northwest, sold out the family years ago. The direction her life has taken since then—she's been working for an independent environmental group—mystifies him. "Rocky Raccoons they must have been," Sam commented. "Sorry, I mean Rambo Raccoons." He was leaning against the blue lattice that protects the outdoor shower, and his dirty, long bare feet slid through the overgrown grass. He aimed a grave stare at Mother. "If you think raccoons can lift up a twenty-pound bird feeder and launch it into the marsh, Mother, well, then—" Abruptly he raised his hands and shouted unintelligibly at a rabbit on the lawn. Beer splashed through his fingers and onto the neck of his New Orleans-bought T-shirt ("Shuck Me! Suck Me! Eat Me Raw!" the T-shirt said—a reference to Gulf Coast oysters). The rabbit moved as far away as was safe, and no farther. "They're just like the pigeons on my street in New York," he announced. "Disgustingly tame."

"Aren't they just *the pits*, Sambo?" Mother said. She liked that expression, "the pits"; I can't remember which one of us gave it to her, most likely Sam. "They've eaten *all* the lilacs . . . and they're adorable, but . . . it's 'cause your father's not here. I think they know your father's not here—"

"You should get a dog," Jay said affably, but Mother shook her head.

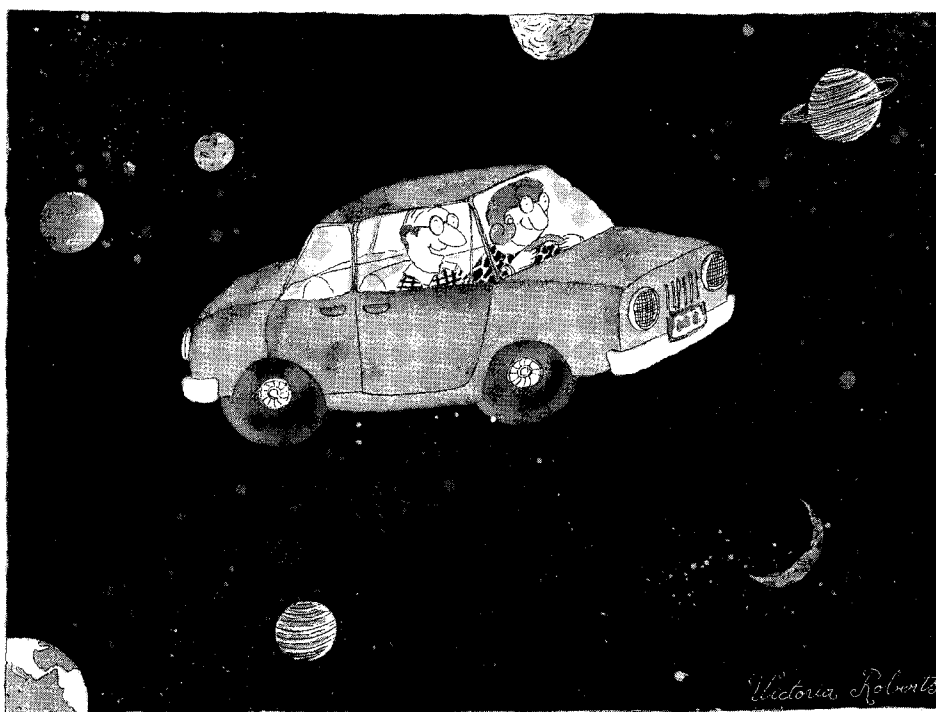
"I hate dogs," she said.

"What about Judy?" Sam said, and then everybody joined in: "What about our other dogs?" "What about Bob?" "What about Lucy?" We'd always given our pets human names.

"Get traps," Sarah said. "They have those Havahart things—"

Jay tossed an empty matchbook on the fire and stepped back. "Hey, man, can I borrow your matches?" he said to Sam.

"No, *man*. You can *not* borrow my matches, *man*. I *need* these matches, *man*," Sam said, and then relented. "You may have them on condition you



"What gear are we in, biscuit?"

don't call me man." Then he added needlessly, "Man."

"Don't give 'em to him, Sam," Doll said. "Don't encourage him."

"I loathed Judy," Mother said. "Bad dog. Smelly. No, I did. I'm not going to get a dog. And besides, what would I do with her if I went someplace—travelling, I mean. Your father was the dog person." She had a mild, thoughtful look in her eyes—nostalgia, as well as a resistance to its soft trap. "Here, Jay, you need matches?" Mother held some out, like a flirt too Old-World to light her cigarette herself.

"J.J.," Doll called over, "don't go near the marsh without me."

"Let him go," Jay said. He made a sudden, rude gesture with the spatula. "He's old enough to go down to the marsh. There's nothing in the marsh. He's not going to get mugged."

"Except by a horseshoe crab," Mother said.

Jay laughed. "Right," he said.

"Ever heard of drowning, Jay, old boy?" Sam said. "Glug, glug, glug?"

"Sam, be quiet for once," Jay said. He faced his wife, missing Sam's flabby salute. "Let him go. What's going to happen?"

"I am *not* going to let him go, there are *ticks*." It was the second or third

time Doll had brought up ticks: she'd read an article in the *Times* Science section that confirmed all her fears about Lyme disease. It said that ticks had infested the Northeast and that everyone should take precautions—especially in high grass. Before coming out onto the porch she'd changed into white pants, tucking the hems under short pink socks; she'd sprayed her upper body with something called Tick Garde, then insisted on doing the same for J.J.

"Judy was a fool," Sam said. "And she smelled rotten. Judy had the breath of a dog who'd died, like, two years before she actually did. And Lyme disease is a complete invention of the press, Doll. It's completely exaggerated. It's so tick-and-insect-repellent guys can make a hell of a lot of money." Brightly, he added, "Hey, here's what we can do—we can somehow get the *ticks* together with the *bunnies*, then the ticks can bite the bunnies and give all the *bunnies* rheumo-arthritis and so"—Sam stood back, awaiting laughter and acclaim that didn't come—"we can wipe out the whole population at the same time. What about it?"

Sam's mood, grimly merry, was accelerating. Someone was about to get insulted; I could feel it, and in the faint



interests of prevention I made a move to herd everybody indoors. When no one followed I lingered in the doorway. "Sam, wanna go with me to the general store to get some ice?" I said finally, but my brother, wandering distractedly around the lawn, barely bothered to shake his head.

"I *know* somebody who has Lyme disease," Doll said after a moment. "She can hardly move her arms. Her nervous system is completely shot. And—"

"Whosat?" Jay looked up. "Who do you know?"

"Someone you don't know," Doll said to Jay, tartly. "We *do* know different people, if you hadn't noticed. And if you don't introduce me to any of your friends don't expect to know mine." She turned to Sam; she looked small and ferocious. "It's real, Sam. It's not just some newspaper stunt."

"Uh-oh." Sam waved a finger mock-warningly. "Trouble on the home front, you guys? The woe that is marriage, you guys?"

"Marriage is terrific," Mother said, with great feeling. She had donned a white apron whose front read, in oversized, thick red letters, "Bitch, Bitch, Bitch." "I *adored* my marriage. Your father gave me forty-five wonderful years. . . ."

But everyone was looking at Jay; he'd taken his place at the center, but this time not for the usual reasons. Did he really not introduce Doll to any of his friends? Who were Jay's friends—of course there were hundreds of them, but who were they? My brother, though, was more interested in getting on with the business at hand. "Anyway, who

wants rare, who wants well done?" he asked.

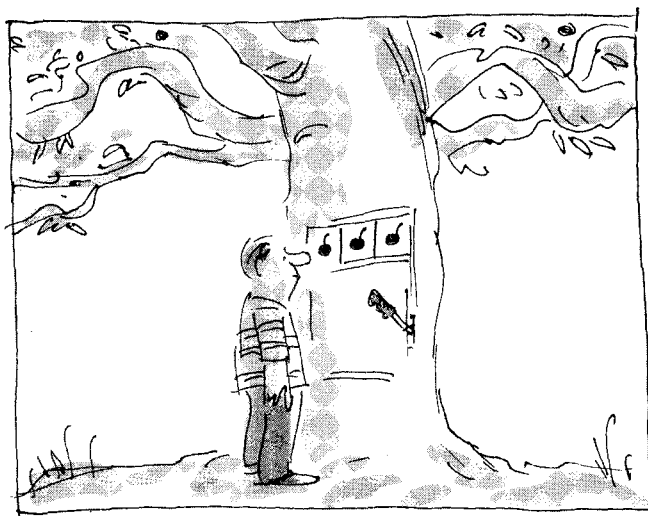
Jay looked as well as I'd ever seen him, and when we'd hugged hello earlier—something we'd done only since Father died—I was reminded that we didn't see each other nearly enough. If families, like motion pictures or sports backfields, have stars, then Jay is ours; and I was happy to see that his good looks—he's the handsomest of all of us brothers, and probably the least screwed up, too—were in no way diminished by age, marriage, or, most miraculously (to me, at least), fatherhood. Where were the pot belly, the pipe, the dull irritation I'd expected to materialize? Nowhere; he looked good—huge and healthy. Jay sells commercial real estate in Boston. He lives in a suburb north of that city that manages the trick of combining both ocean and horse pastures, and he is, from all reports, a big deal at his office, where, among other perks, he's the beneficiary of a seemingly infinite number of hard-to-get tickets—Celtics, Red Sox, and, most recently, the Rolling Stones—which he's more than generous in handing out to his friends.

"Pete and Patricia McPerfect are back in town," Sam had whispered to me as Jay and Doll were putting their bags in the back room. "And that child of theirs, he's a *genius*! Why, not since *Jesus* have I seen a child with such extraordinary grace and aptitude. Just like his *amazing lug father*." That made me laugh, his sarcasm a clear indication that we were all, for better or for worse, under the same roof again. There's a legend in our family that somehow Jay got a better shake in life

than the rest of us, and Sam, I think, feels this imbalance more acutely than the rest of us. Growing up, the two of them might have come from different families on the same block. "If he weren't in this family, Jam," Sam once told me, "I wouldn't know him. In real life, I mean, I'd have no reason to know that guy. Someone like that would bore the bloody hell out of me."

My name is John. I detested that nickname: Jam, Jambo, Jammer. Yet I was stuck with it and its robust, middling, good-guy associations, just as Jay, the leader, Sam, the troubled youngest, and Sarah (by default), the stubborn, rebellious one, are doomed to play out these roles no matter how their lives disprove them. Though my wife and I fled New England and its numbing small-worldness almost ten years ago—escaping what she calls the Didn't We Throw Up Together at Hotchkiss Syndrome—recently, she and I have been discussing the possibility of coming home. "You say the word, John," Caroline has said more than once, "and I'll be shopping at J. Crew in my deck shoes before you know what hit you." But, for all her joking, Caroline misses her old Radcliffe chums, the ocean; her own father isn't too well; and, for my part, I feel that at least one of us should visit Mother more regularly.

Sam was furious when Mother sold the house in the city—less because of nostalgia, I think, than because he imagined the sale diminished him in other people's eyes—and while Jay and Doll were getting ready for dinner, he wandered around seeing what had been altered, or defiled, now and



then coming back onto the porch, his voice lightly cutting. "Where's the cockfight print that hung in Jay's room?"

"Frame's being cleaned."

"What happened to the chest of drawers that Father said was *mine*?"

"Basement, Sam—a family of mice was living in the sweater drawer."

"Ping-Pong table?"

"Basement again. Why don't two of you handsome men take a side each and set it up on the porch?"

"Why does the house look so little?"

NOW, as Jay and Doll emerged from the back of the house, Sam hovered before his place at the table and began to bite his nails.

"Caroline, you're in charge of the music department," Mother sang out—on the theory, I imagined, that assigning her in-laws tasks makes them feel at home—"and Jay carves."

"Put on Lou Reed," Sam ordered. "Put on Guns N' Roses or Lou. Let's have some Lou. Let's get this house *going*—"

"Anybody but Lou Reed," said Sarah, staring down at the steaks. "Jay, I want mine rare. I want mine still breathing."

Doll had her hand on her purse. "Can we contribute any to the food?"

"Oh, absolutely not," Mother said. "Don't be silly."

"What do you think we are?" Sam said to Doll. "Indigents?" He looked terribly offended. "Someone put on Lou Reed," he insisted.

"Oh, darling, no, please," Mother said. "This is dinner music. Let's all be *civilized*. Put on that black I like." She stood in back of Jay, watching

as he transferred steaks onto the platter. "Roberta"—she pronounced it "Roberti"—"Flack." "And no more tick talk, Sam, really."

"Lou, Lou, Lou," Sam chanted.

Sit-down dinners are rare for us, but tonight, with all her family gathered in one place, Mother had made, I thought, a splendid, detailed effort. The table in the dining room, its glowing ceremoniousness, made all my reservations vanish, and even when Sam sidled up to me holding a Heineken and said, "Looks like a funeral parlor in here—where's the body?" I grinned idiotically; I couldn't keep my eyes away from the table. Lilies of the valley floated in white saucers; wildflowers drooped from a shallow glass on the sideboard; there were candles and our good silver, and, beside each setting, place cards Mother had meticulously inscribed.

Yet, despite the gorgeousness of the table, dinner was strained, and there were moments when I think each of us was grateful for the distracting sounds of silverware. The steaks were tough, and Doll smashed a wineglass by accident. Sam got privately, delicately drunk—that's his prerogative. We were all dealing with being back home in our own ways. The drawback was that he lost his timing. "Please pass the embalming fluid," he kept saying during the first course, referring to the cucumber soup, though only I grasped what he meant.

"Could you translate that into English?" Caroline asked at one point. Sam smiled mysteriously and fluttered his eyes at the ceiling.

"Does my cucumber soup taste like

embalming fluid?" Mother said. "Is that it, Sam?"

"I defer to the brothers o' mine," Sam croaked, with great, obnoxious politeness, his look sweeping back across the table and landing on the centerpiece.

"Why can't anybody in this family ever say what they mean?" Sarah said loudly. "It's like everybody's talking *Esperanto* or something—"

"Let's ask the Good Doctor," Sam said. "Caroline, you're on. Five seconds." But before Caroline could reply he barked out, "*Bzzzt!* Time! Sorry, Caroline, you win a case of Turtle Wax!"

Normally Caroline finds Sam amusing—even when I don't—but this time I could tell she was annoyed. At a loss for an appropriate response (with your in-laws, your rights are never entirely clear), she shook her head, looked questioningly across the table at me, then out at the darkening bay water. "Simmer down, Sam," I said in a voice much too low for him to hear, then felt ashamed that I hadn't come to my wife's defense more authoritatively.

By then, though, everyone's attention had passed to J.J., who was grabbing at the asparagus with his fingers, biting off the dully beaded heads and replacing the stems on his plate. "Cave-boy child," Sam murmured, without affection, and as he spooned rice onto his plate Caroline gazed at his slack, prematurely lined profile with an expression—neutral, serene, shut off—that I imagine she must use to maddening effect at work.

None of us, for some reason, was

in full voice. "Just another night at the Knowleses," Mother kept saying, as though a cheerfully unmanageable chaos were taking place in her dining room. The implication rang hollow. How were we to know what nights at the Knowleses were like anymore? Mother talked at length about her plans to take a cruise down the Nile in December with a group of British bird-watchers. It was the first time any of us had heard mention of this trip. "I've always been mad for Egyptian artifacts," she said.

"Oh, have you *rally*? Since when?" Sam wanted to know.

"Well, since always." Mother looked embarrassed. "Since I was a little girl. But, you see, your father never really liked to travel." There was a silence.

"So?" Sam said. "Some people don't like to travel. I mean, *I* don't like to travel. *I* had two parties to go to in New York this weekend—"

I interrupted. "Well, I think all of us wish you'd gone to them, and spared us. I think Egypt's a terrific idea."

"Mother, don't you think it's a little soon?" Sarah inquired flatly. Mother stared across the table at her.

"Soon?" she repeated. "No. No. I don't think it's too soon. Do you all think it is? Too soon for what?"

When Sarah didn't answer, Mother said, "Dearie, you don't expect me to sit here and watch the fog come in for the rest of my life, do you?" Then she added, "Sarah, I may be no spring chicken, but I can still *cluck*."

Doll was quiet during dinner except to acknowledge, briefly, under questioning, that she hadn't any idea what she and Jay were going to name the new baby girl (they'd had the test, and already knew the sex). She liked the name "Suzani."

"Don't you think that's, uh, like, just a little bit precious?" Sam asked.

"I like 'Molly,'"

Mother interrupted. "And I like 'Sarah,' of course, and I like 'Katherine' with a 'K.'"

"I like 'Kate,'" Doll volunteered.

"Oh, yeah, right," Sam said. "That's like your basic free-spirited *heroine* name. That and 'Maggie.' Just pretty please, guys, for my sake, don't give her any of those fake-o, wishful-preppie names—you know, like Chelsea."

"One thing I know, heart," Doll said, smiling back at him. "We're sure not going to name the baby after you."

J.J. was acting like a complete pest; he's as spoiled a kid as I've seen, and his parents have always seemed either unable or unwilling to set any limits for him. When he wasn't switching the overhead dining-room lights off and on, or applying pressure to the maid's button on the floor, causing a rusty bell to cry out weakly in the kitchen, he was meowing with his head in his mother's lap. This was funny and ingratiating at first, but when he kept it up Jay snapped at him, "For Christ's sake, buddy, will you just put a *lid* on it?"

J.J.'s face twisted, and, lapsing into sudden, loud tears, he buried his head

even farther in Doll's lap. At that, Sam clapped lonesomely, sarcastically—whether at the effect or at the words I wasn't sure. "Oh, my God, Jay," he groaned, "maybe you *shouldn't* have ol' Chelsea—" and then he stopped short, glancing first at me, then at Sarah, for help in finishing.

"Minor crisis," Doll murmured, smiling grimly, rubbing J.J.'s scalp. "Minor crisis." Then she said something that staggered the table. First she asked Mother to pass the pepper, and then when she was halfway through shaking it onto her rice she looked up very calmly at Jay and said, in a smooth, reasonable voice, "If you ever talk to him like that in front of other people again, I'm gonna put your balls out on a tray and crush 'em. *Buddy*. O.K.?"

She wasn't in the least bit drunk—like most pregnant women, she'd sworn off the stuff. (She'd also given up her formerly ever-present pack of Merits.) Yet, looking around, I didn't think anybody at the table, including Jay, could believe that any sober person would be capable of making a remark such as that in front of her husband's whole family—on a weekend, no less, supposedly dedicated to good feeling, to nostalgia, and to reassurance that although we were missing a person at the table, we were still recognizably the same family.

Sam tried to joke the table back to sanity. "Really?" he said to Doll. His eyes were as wide as Sarah's, but he was clearly amused. "Crush 'em? You mean, crush 'em like lobster claws? *Agggghhh! Agggghhh!*"

Sarah giggled, then glanced at Jay, who looked hurt and embarrassed. I was aware of some shift in his eyes and his chin. Subtly he eyed us all. An increased politeness in his manner signified to me that he was now playing to his family, almost as though he'd never left home; he was



"Mr. and Mrs. Stephen McCarter James request the honor of your presence at the marriage of their daughter, Deirdre Belknap, to her job."

ours now and Doll merely a teen-age date he'd brought home for inspection, whom he'd unthinkingly end up betraying. "Well, honey, we're all trying to eat here, and he's pretty tired," he said.

"So *show* that when you're talking to him," Doll said. "Show a little understanding sometimes, it won't *kill* you, Jay."

"Oh, I think we can eat, and play with the lights, and meow, and do everything at the same time," Mother said tiredly. "Who wants more pilaf?"

"So," Jay said to Sam in the silence that followed, "how's life treating you in the Big Apple?" Jay can refer to the Big Apple and not realize that he's uttered a rube's faux pas.

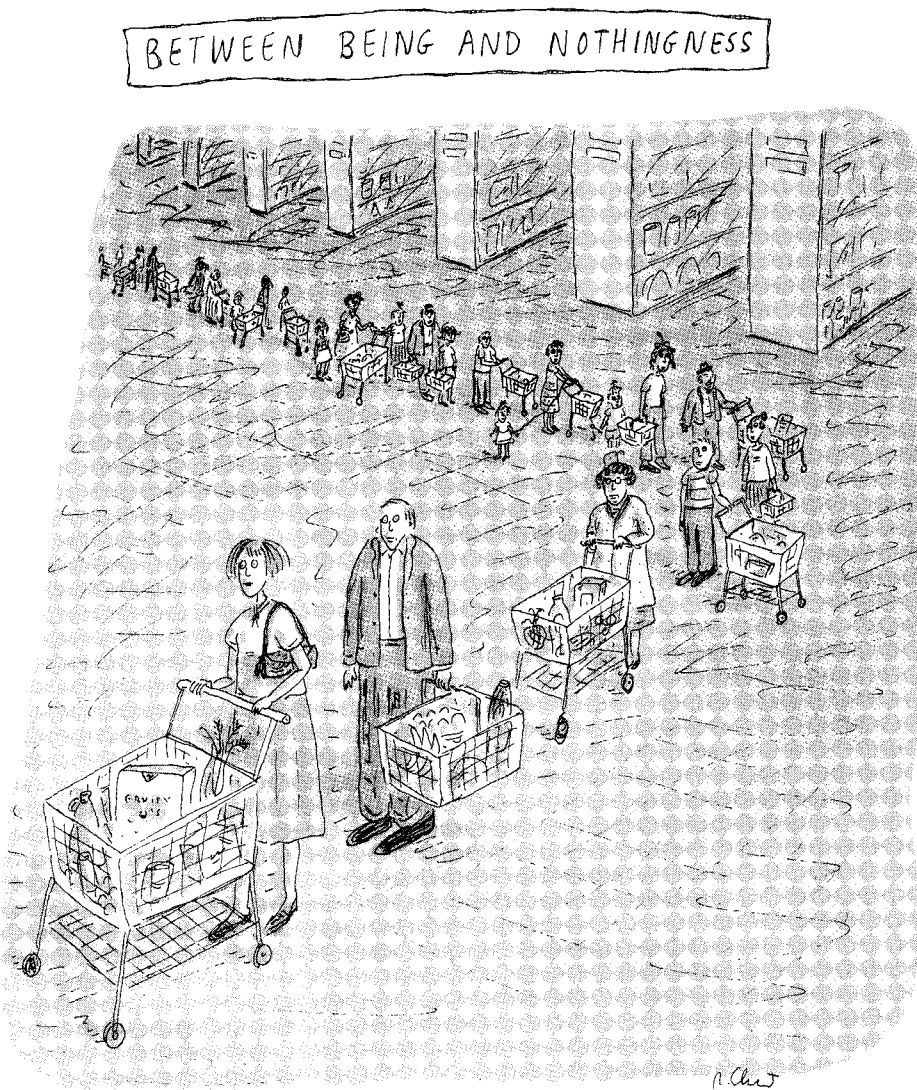
"Fine, Dad," Sam said, absently, solemnly. "Oops, I mean, Fine, Jay. 'The Big Apple?'" His tone was withering.

"Sam, why do you hate me so much?" This, the next thing Jay wanted to know, landed on the dinner table like an unspoken assumption—so much so that I wondered whether Jay had actually said anything.

There was a silence. No one laughed. Then, slowly, with a politeness that hung over our heads like a thick, pea-green obscenity, Sam said, "Why, I don't hate you, Jay," and I think that, despite his dumb, belabored irony, he really meant it. Then he had to add, "What makes you say-slash-think that?"

Mother politely bothered to groan, "Oh, Sam, you're *too much*," and then, rather officially, she stood to announce that she had a surprise—would we mind gathering in the living room? None of us, I think, was in any mood for more surprises, but we did as she said, taking seats on the enormous white couch against the far wall: boy, girl, boy, girl.

Nothing in that room had changed much since my last visit home. The Oriental rug with its jagged slice across one corner. The books on sailing, wildflowers, the history of the region. Father's old hardcover G. K. Chesterton and Mr. Fortune mysteries. The two prints on the wall over the couch, "The Tree of Life" and "The Tree of Death," with their fertile, puritanical blossoms. Purity and Godliness swelled on the branches of the former, while on the latter fruits as round



and black as bombs bore labels like Deceit, Vainglory, and Love of the World.

Doll excused herself, with J.J. in tow. Jay called after her, offering his help in putting J.J. to bed, and when she shook her head he gazed at her retreating figure with a quizzical, oddly self-satisfied expression. Sam started crooning "Try a Little Tenderness" in a deep, hambone, dinner-theatre voice, and Caroline suddenly pitched a pillow at him. More amused than indignant, he threw it lightly back, missed Caroline, and instead hit "The Tree of Life," which rocked on its wire.

"I'm sorry," I whispered to Caroline. "I've never seen these people before in my life. We must have taken a wrong turn back somewhere." She smiled and squeezed my arm, yet when she whispered back, "How are *you* doing, sweet?" I felt insulted. Was she criticizing us?

When Mother spoke, her voice was

firm and excited. She announced that she'd unearthed a carton in the basement, packed with tapes, the reel-to-reel kind. None of them were labelled, and she'd spent the past week playing them all, trying to identify their contents. I could see Sarah not exactly stiffen, but a glazed, formal, and almost forlorn expression—her version of preparedness—came over her face, and she crossed and uncrossed her legs. "Oh, no," she said, placing both hands over her ears. "If it's what I think it is, I'm going into the next room."

The fear, I think, in everybody's—not just Sarah's—mind was that Mother had uncovered a recording of Father's voice, and the anticipation of hearing it was unsettling, spooky. It was impossible to predict the impact of his low, calm, correcting voice on our ears nearly a year after his death. Was this what she'd planned for the long weekend—was this the big event? But, no,

it was, Mother announced, a recording of all our voices when we were young. "Now, it's *adorable*. Wait till you hear."

SHE left the room and came back lugging the Teac seven-inch reel-to-reel recorder on which Father used to play his music tapes, and with Jay's help set it up on the mantelpiece. At the time the tape recording was made, Jay must have been around eleven, I was a year younger, Sarah was seven, and Sam five. The tape began as a jumble of high voices; then, before long, I could discern Sarah's voice. She was going on, at some length, about one of her dolls when she was interrupted in the background by Jay, who was making the roaring sounds of a race car. Soon we heard a strange, shockingly sweet voice: Sam's. Sarah could be heard offering him a doll. "You can play with it if you want," she said.

"Thankh," said the Sam voice. He had a lisp when he was little.

On the couch Sarah, relieved, made a face and poured herself some more wine. "This is a nightmare," she began lazily, but Mother held up her hand.

"Ssshhh!"

"Sam! Sam!" the seven-year-old Sarah was saying. "D'you like dolls?"

"That's *you*, darling," Mother said to Sarah.

"Yeth," child Sam replied in his lisping voice, "I *love* dollth."

"So Sambo loves dolls," commented the thirty-four-year-old Jay, hunched forward on the couch, a broad, fractious grin on his face. "Christ, no wonder you're such a fuckup."

"Sshhh," Mother said. "There's more. Jammer, that's you."

In retrospect, I think Jay was genuinely delighted to hear our ardent, disembodied younger selves, and, embarrassed by his own enthusiasm, was attempting, in his way, to interrupt the spell that had fallen over the room. But people sometimes hear what they fear hearing, and Sam, drifting in and out of the doorway, heard, I think, only something that panicked him: no matter how much trouble he'd taken to invent himself as an attractively careless scion of the Knowleses and a credit to his father, the members of his family still saw him as a sad, lazy, effeminate, slightly shifty lunk.

"Isn't that marvellous?" Mother said as the tape came to a close and the oven buzzer, as though precisely timed, rang out from the kitchen. "Isn't that the most marvellous thing you've ever heard in your life? Tomorrow, I'm going to make copies for all of you."

We went onto the porch for coffee

and two pies, pecan and apple. On the way out, I swatted Sam on the butt as a gesture of sympathy, but he misinterpreted the impulse, whirling around sharply as though I'd made a move to undress him. Although I told myself that frictions were inevitable on a weekend such as this, I felt dismayed by my unsuccessful attempts at peacemaking, and I came out onto the dark porch feeling hopeless. Yet the night was one of the clearest I'd ever seen, the stars so sharp they appeared to be nicking the sky. On the water, buoys were clinking—a woeful sound, which I love—while on the outer beach a few stray fireworks rushed the holiday and puffed delicately apart in the sky. Caroline linked her arm through mine, and the look on her face was loving and consoling.

Caroline broke the silence then, and began talking about a degenerative disease, caused by brain lesions: every few minutes the sufferer experiences *déjà vu*. This sounded nightmarish to me, and I said so. "Wouldn't you go mad after a while?" I asked.

Caroline was answering, "No, because of course you'd feel you already *had* gone mad," when Sam, hugging Father's tape recorder in his arms as if it were an overlarge infant, sauntered outside.

"Come join us, darling—"

"Hey, everybody, listen—"

Gnats were raining down on the porch screen that opens out onto the lawn, and June bugs, fat and hard, kept smacking against the door and falling backward; in the dim light of the porch under the Chinese lantern, breathing the air fragrant with Cutter insect spray, we stared up stupidly at Sam.

"Have you found another tape?" Mother said, with some trouble. She was quite drunk, I could tell, but with the excitement of everybody's coming home for the weekend none of us could really begrudge her. A moment earlier she'd wondered aloud, "Which one of you marvellous creatures has absconded with my wine," gazing at us, her mouth slightly open.

"Haven't we done this?" Sarah asked. Her long body was slung across the porch swing. "Sammy, it's O.K. once, but I think *twice*



"We sing her to sleep with songs about recycling."

is a little hard to take. I don't really *like* myself as a brat quite as much as you do. I have the hiccups," she went on, to no one in particular.

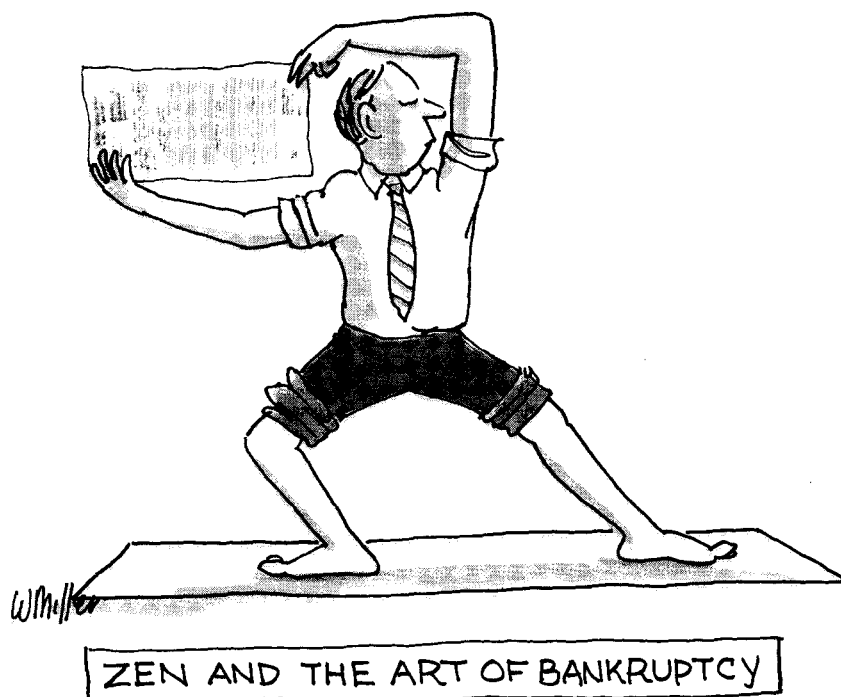
Sam had changed into canvas shorts, long blue boxers underneath them, ragged hems peeping out: a carefully untoward look he'd never been able to get away with in high school—he'd been too shy, not the right type. "No, no. *Listen*," he said, and as the reels began to spin slowly around—spell-bound cartoon eyes in their huge, formal sockets—Mother came forward slightly in her seat, an eager, perplexed expression on her face.

The tape was the same one we'd listened to just fifteen minutes earlier. Again we heard Jay making roaring noises with his lips, and Sarah offering Sam her doll. This time, though, in response to her question about whether he liked dolls, the texture of the tape changed and a new voice, a jaunty, drunk twenty-eight-year-old's, thick enough to suggest a head cold, came forth. "No," it said, deep, sour, stuffed up. "I hate dolls. I want to shave their heads with a straight razor."

I was so startled and outraged that I actually laughed out loud. My sister dropped her fork ("Like in some dumb movie," she told me later, self-admiringly). For a moment nobody said anything, though I'm certain that the naïve, surprised expression on Sam's face struck not only me but all of us as unbelievably foolish. At the end of the table, Mother looked as though someone had slapped her face. She rose, and for the first time Sam looked scared. "Son," she said. Her voice was passionate. "You have a *talent* for breaking my heart. A *talent*. You should go *onstage* with it. Go right ahead." She picked up her small, rounded pie knife and held it out. "Cut my heart. *Cut* it."

As usual, Mother had gone too far. With one gesture too many—actually picking up the absurd pie knife, waving it around—she'd diminished the effect she had intended, and, seeming to realize this, she stood there swatting at a bug with her free hand, gradually lowering the knife. "You are *the pits*, Sam," she added angrily.

"What?" Sam said. He glanced around the table carefully, taking in each one of us, a school prefect mutely counting heads. He sounded indignant. "No, what? What's the big deal? I hate dolls," as though this were a



basic truth that should surprise no one who knew him well.

THE next morning passed without incident. We—Jay, Sam, and I—began playing tennis at a neighbor's court, which we'd walked half a mile to, so all of us were in moods that embraced our own satisfaction at living (fleetingly, at least) what felt like bracingly athletic and sanitized country lives. The day was cool and cloudy, and the clematis bordering the road was in snowy, uproarious bloom. Caroline joined us before long, and the team of Jay and Caroline won their set so effortlessly that we all agreed to switch off, with—this part was unspoken—the best and worst players paired. It was decided that Jay and Sam should compose one side, Caroline and I the other, and when Sam realized that he was unanimously considered the worst player he quit, saying he had a blister on his left heel that was on the verge of exploding, and leaving the rest of us to play three lopsided games of Canadian doubles.

The court—a good clay one—belongs to a huge Irish-Catholic family named Flaherty, and, as Sam was absently sweeping out a puddle in the backcourt, Francesca, the middle Flaherty daughter, sat down on one of the stone benches overlooking the court. I hadn't seen Francesca since we were teen-agers and our families practically

insisted that the children be friends, but I remembered her fondly, as I do any familiar figures from the road, no matter how noisome or bizarre they used to be as children. The small, gleeful, dirty-faced girl who used to dash out naked into the road and perform a wriggling dance for passing drivers had become a slender, wide-eyed beauty, whom I didn't recognize at first; and, since Sam had removed himself from active tennis duty, she accepted our invitation to play a set, which the team of Jay and I won—barely scraping by—in a tiebreaker. The four of us had been instantly compatible on the court, and when Caroline suggested another set everyone was eager. Now and then I glanced over at the sidelines, where Sam was standing between stone benches, with his arms tightly crossed.

I could tell Sam's interest was aroused by Francesca, and I also knew how badly he wanted to play, if only because she was playing, but I still hadn't forgiven him for the night before, and I felt a certain sadistic pleasure as I watched him stewing courtside. His subsequent attempts to atone for the scene on the porch—washing all the plates and coffee cups, setting up the Ping-Pong table alone on the porch while the rest of us were gathered around the VCR to watch "Body Heat"—had convinced no one of his remorse.

But, after the second set was over

WHAT IT IS LIKE

I will have to tell you what it is like, since I was the one lying on my back with my arms in the air and a blanket up to my chin, since I was the one on a mattress and the one trying to make up my mind whether it was an early Heaven just being there or whether it was another bitter vertigo.

There were great parties where I went out on a back porch and stared through the sycamores, and there were parties, mostly lawless gatherings, where we stood on the beach apart from each other studying the sky. For me it's always the earth; I'm one of the addicts; I can hardly stand the dreaminess; I get burnt, I blister

at night as others do in the day. Last summer I lay there crying. It was California and the sheep vision. I was on a mattress looking up. I started to talk. Aside from the stars, aside from the beating heart, I only remember two things: both hands were in the air and I was, for the first time in twenty years,

lying down without fear. My friend Robin was there beside me; she was sobbing. I have such gratitude toward her. It was her house, it was her stars. She took me down to see the sheep first, then she showed me the ocean. It was an outside room; one wall was a maple, one wall was made of planter boxes. There were

tomatoes and eggplants in one, there was lavender and basil in another. I remember the trees on every side; I know there was oak and redwood; there was a twisted madrona with leaves in leathery piles, almost like rhododendron. Robin knew the shadows, she knew the edges, she knew the clouds, she knew the sky. It was

the summer of 1989. The charts have already registered my odd affliction and the stars absorbed my happiness. Standing—or lying—you could see a horse to the right, if you were facing north, and a white dragon if you were facing south. I think I never slept that night. I only dozed. And ranted.

—GERALD STERN

and we were debating whether to play another, I took pity on Sam, and held out my racket. He shook his head. He was pinned to the wall by his blister excuse, and also didn't want to appear in any way uncoordinated or pitiable—I couldn't blame him—in front of a player as experienced as Francesca. He was rescued by, of all people, Jay, who announced that he'd had enough tennis for the morning and that if we wanted to go to the beach we'd better start off before the parking lots got too crowded. Before leaving the Flahertys', Sam jokingly invited Francesca to join us, and to everybody's surprise she accepted without hesitation.

"So how're your parents doing?" Francesca wanted to know. She was zipping up her racket in its rubber sleeve.

Sam said, "Well, actually, if you hadn't heard, my father *died*." He glanced around him quickly, to see whether the rest of us minded his using the "my." When Francesca responded, "Oh, God, I'm so sorry, I didn't know," Sam added, hastily, "No, just kidding, he didn't die, just putting you *on* here. Little summer joke here."

This exchange with Sam seemed to perplex her thoroughly. She stood there, looking mildly offended, as though my brother had introduced a language he knew perfectly well she didn't speak.

Finally Sam said, in a sad voice, "No, really, Francesca. He really did die. Really."

"Boy, that's very funny, Sam," Jay said.

"I *am* hilarious," Sam shouted, his voice echoing up the road.

As we walked along he sustained a loud monologue about the recent construction on the island. He barely recognized the road he'd grown up on anymore—*his* road. He snorted at houses with names like Sea Song and Wind Chimes, and at certain well-tended lawns (excessive neatness, Sam had decided, or read somewhere, was emblematic of middle-class desperation). Clearly he was performing for Francesca, testing her, and whether or not she was aware of it she'd get plus or minus points on the basis of her reactions to his outlandish statements.



"Hold on, hold on here, please," Sam commanded as we neared the end of the road. "We absolutely *must* pause, we simply *have* to halt our little feet *ici*." He'd pulled up in front of a sign that read, in black letters, "MAYFLOWER MANSION," and, under it, "L. YANKELOVITCH, PROPRIETOR," and now he heaved a giant, pedantic sigh, and gestured at the pretty little red saltbox set back beyond the hedge.

Part of Sam's attractiveness to women, I've always felt, has to do with his careful inflections, the actor's timing with which he delivers his words. Sam amused Francesca, I could tell that plainly, but, then again, she seemed like the kind of girl for whom flirting and laughing at boys' jokes were acts as natural and necessary as breathing. "So, Sam," she said at one point, "if you're going to be here for the weekend you'll have to come over and *play*."

She was clearly Sam's type: pretty, tanned, from a rich family, slow-witted enough for him to manipulate, except—horror of horrors—she was Catholic. I wondered whether anything would come of it, and I had a feeling this had occurred to Sam, too. By the time we reached the house his mood was buoyant and careless. He kept touching her shoulder. "Y'know, Francesca," he said chastely, "some-

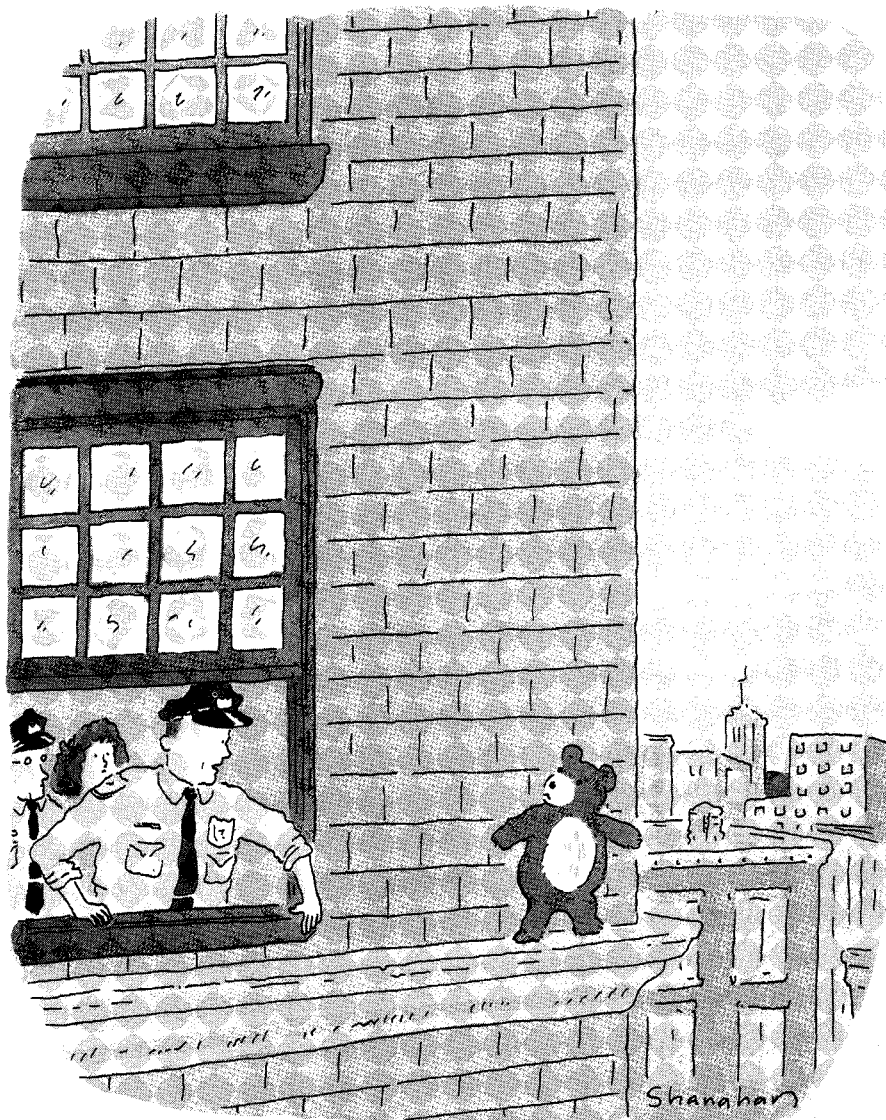
one asked me a couple of months ago, 'If you could ask your father *one thing*, what would it be?' And, y'know, it'd be, not, like, 'Do you like me?' Or, 'Say, Dad, if you had to kill one of us, who would it be?'" There was no sun, but he squinted anyway. "Y'know what it'd be? It'd be, 'Dad, excuse me, Dad, but is your watch waterproof?' See, when he died I got his *watch*. It turns my wrist all black when I sweat or if I get wet—see, you can see—but I'm always forgetting to take it off in the shower, so that's why I'm so *curious*, y'know?"

BACK at the house, we packed a picnic lunch and drove to the ocean, where we used to go as children. We took Big Red, Mother's giant, broken-down station wagon, since it was the only car with a beach-and-dump sticker on its back window. The parking lot was crowded—mostly with B.M.W.s and new Mercedeses—and then, since Mother's sticker turned out to be last year's, the attendant told us it would cost six dollars to park. From the back seat, Sam announced he wasn't about to pay money to sit on a beach he'd been going to all his life. I don't think he actually cared a lot—he hadn't brought any money with him anyway—but his self-righteousness infected everyone in the car, and we ended up parking illegally on the fringe of somebody's marsh. First, though, we dropped Doll and J.J. off at the attendant's booth; Doll, the can of Tick Garde tucked under her armpit, wasn't about to walk through any marshes. "There might as well be a sign there saying 'Tick Farm,'" she announced peevishly, sounding more like the daughter of a chaplain than of the man who owned practically every radio and cable-TV station in Kentucky.

Behind the wheel, Jay sighed. "I'd like to put a tick in her Shredded Wheat," he commented. Everybody laughed.

Sam said, "There was an ant floating in the thing of honey this morning." His voice was accusing. "When was the last time anybody bothered to clean out the pantry?"

"Doll hates our guts," Sarah commented from the back seat, glumly good-natured. "She thinks we're all crazy." It was hard to miss the showy note of pride in her voice.



"There's an Officer Ripley inside who sure could use a hug."

"Oh, she does not," Mother said quickly. "Does she, Jay? I don't think Doll hates our guts. If anything, I think she hates not being with her *own* family during the holiday."

"July Fourth is hardly what you'd call a *family* time, Mother," Sarah said.

Mother sighed heavily. "Will everybody stop criticizing me, please? Just *stop* it. I mean it. Really. You kids are acting like a bunch of *vipers*."

Sam got out of the car and laid his head down on the hot roof. "This town's going completely to seed," he complained, his point, I think, being that probably only in New England would the presence of the latest-model foreign cars—supplanting those lame, ancient, wood-studded station wagons—be a sign that the Devil was

near. "Dis town be such a *ley-mon*."

On the way to the beach, Led Zeppelin's "The Lemon Song" had come on the radio, and Sam had reached over the seat to crank it up loud, though Mother kept repeating, "Who is this man? He's like an angry hornet."

THE beach was crowded, the sand covered with pine needles and cigarette butts and drinking straws. On some level I'd expected summers to come to a halt once I'd left the island. Naturally they hadn't, and wouldn't, but it was still unsettling to stumble upon the ongoing summers of strangers. There was an oddly limp, poisoned, and colorless quality to the sand and the sky that I associated with exhaustion and desuetude. The dunes

had "EROSION" signs all over them. The green cans were spilling over with garbage, which attracted yellow jackets. The ramp down to the beach was cracked and shabby, and the hot dogs and fried-clam platters for sale at Tod's Snack Hut seemed less like timeless summer treats than summary invitations to coronary. The Coast Guard boat, deadily still, lay on the horizon—the old target ship the one recognizable constant of the beach we had known all our lives. Our own spot, thirty feet from the shoreline, resembled the crowded interior of a vacation hut; Mother had brought along gaily colored lawn chairs, towels, a picnic basket as well as several thermoses, a black transistor radio, a parasol, and pillows from one of the guest-room couches. "So where's the damn television?" I whispered to my wife.

Everybody, including Caroline and me, went in for a ten-minute swim; then we came back up the beach, leaving Sam and Francesca in the water, but when Francesca began a vigorous crawl out into deeper water Sam angled his way back up the beach to where we were sitting. "Angled" isn't a word I use lightly. Ever since Sam lost weight he's seemed unsure about how his body looks to other people; he still moves with the careful, guarded posture of a man forty pounds heavier and considerably less assured. His selection of bathing suit—a pair of ratty trunks pulled up high, with antique gray strings in front—comically confirmed his modesty. Never once did he face us; he made his way up the beach sideways, like a man favoring an old injury. Finally reaching our spot, he collapsed onto his blue towel, stuffed himself into his shirt, and grabbed his book.

"So how's dat ol' patriotic Midwest?" he said to Caroline. His voice was profoundly lazy. "Played midwife to any ewes recently? Seen any Satanists at any cheddar festivals?"

For five years now, Caroline and I have lived in Ann Arbor, a place whose smooth-faced imperturbability, Sam insists, disguises daily acts of unspeakable corruption and lewdness. I teach English at the university there, and though I haven't quite adjusted to the hard winters of the Midwest, I enjoy my work, my colleagues, and my students. And my wife—she has a private practice—has more patients than she can handle (none of whom, as far as I know, are practicing Satanists or sex weirdos).

Sam claims to have an aversion to the Midwest. "Too claustrophobic," he usually says. "Too much blue-collar blubber. At least people on the two coasts give a damn about what they look like."

"You ought to come visit us, Sam," Caroline said, for what seemed like the tenth time in as many years. "We have plenty of room."

Sam's eyes showed no indication that he'd heard her. Then he said, "I can't that day, sorry," and turned over onto his stomach.

"Fine," Caroline said coldly. "Neither can we."

"B-E—" Sarah was trying to read smoke letters from a small airplane's exhaust. "B-E-something . . . B-E-G-something . . ."

"There's fireworks at Cary's Landing later on," Mother said. "They're

madly illegal, but they still take place, even though that Kramer boy lost the tip of his finger last year." She rolled, with difficulty, onto her back. "I think we should all go see the fireworks. Who'll come see fireworks with me tonight?"

When no one answered she passed the lotion to Doll. Poor Doll—she was the only one of us not drinking, and she sat in the hollow of a dune, in a white floppy hat and sunglasses, randomly picking at her onion rings, looking for all the world like a tiny, white, fragile good-luck trophy you might win after riding the merry-go-round ten times in a row. Nobody had mentioned the scene at the table the night before, and I noticed that, by the time Jay woke up, Doll, J.J., and Sarah had gone into town to shop. And when they returned Doll hadn't wanted to come to the beach at all.

"How are you feeling?" Mother said to Doll. "Are you comfortable? Can I get you anything?"

"A lobotomy," Doll said. "I think I'd like a full-frontal lobotomy." She got up to stretch, and proceeded to head toward the shore. "But, since none of you can give me a lobotomy, I'm going to get my feet wet."

"Why does she want a lobotomy?" Mother demanded. "Jay, why does Doll want a lobotomy?"

He shrugged. "Don't ask," he said.

"Why'd you get one, big guy?" Sam drawled. "Peer pressure?"

"Is Doll all right?" Mother said, and without waiting for him to answer she answered herself. "Well, being pregnant is hard on *anybody*. On the nerves. Not to mention your mood, I mean. It's no fun. Really. Even for Doll."

"I agree with you there, Mother," Jay said, and then he jumped up—he's not one for keeping still very long—and proposed a game of Frisbee, and all of us except Mother and Sam took positions in the sand. After a few



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rounds, Jay and Francesca jogged down to the water.

"Oh, are those crazies going swimming? I find it just too *hot* to swim," Mother said. "The waves are so rough. And the tide's high. Last week there were jellyfish rushing around stinging people. I think *I* will stay right here where I am, and enjoy my drink and having all you wonderful people around me."

Across from me, looking stodgy in the sand, his calves soft and veined and winter white, the only one of the boys not just wearing a shirt but with it tucked inside his trunks, Sam stared after Jay as he plowed into the water; before long it became obvious that Jay had taken it upon himself to instruct Francesca on the finer points of bodysurfing. She stood ankle-deep in the water, both hands on her knees, laughing. Her figure was terrific, lithe and dark-skinned if slightly over-Nautilused, and at that moment, with the waves softly slugging her legs, she seemed to me the tanned, freckled, and adorable essence of a summer girl.

My younger brother looked terribly gloomy. "He's going to swim out to sea," he said in a low voice. "Watch. It's so banal. He's showing off for her. Oh, gee, let's all be the Kennedys or something. Hey, John-John, catch. Hey, Bobby, hey, Eunice. Just watch. Oh, it's so ridiculous. It's just all so trite and predictable and pathetic—"

"What are you talking about?" I said.

"Just because his bitchy wife's out of commission that asshole's going after her. And she's *my* friend. *I'm* the one she likes."

This seemed to me so ludicrous a translation of the situation that I just stared at him in disbelief. "Sam," I said, "you're dreaming. You're having a hallucination. You're having an acid flashback."

Sam had a match between his teeth—now he was sucking off the head. For an accuser he seemed nervous. "It's not as though he hasn't tried it before. Remember Julie? Remember he tried to take her miniature golfing with him when I had a cold and I couldn't go?"

"He's just being *nice* to her, Sam," I said. "For God's sake, we've all known her since she was two. And the only thing you've been doing is putting down the place where she's lived all her life. All that about whatever-their-

names-are—the Yankelovitches, I mean. Consider how that might make her feel."

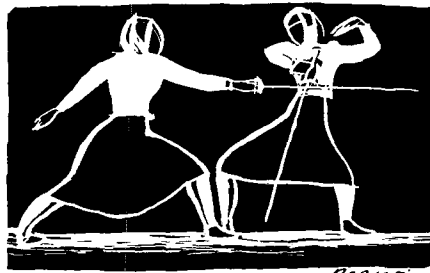
Hearing this, Sam seemed to cheer up a little. "That's right," he said. "That's right." I thought at first that he was regretting what he'd said, but I was wrong—he was merely preparing his case against Francesca, like a lawyer jumping sides midway through the trial. "Her father's a *construction executive*," Sam said sourly. "I mean, we're talking about a guy who lives in a *mock-Tudor* house. We're talking major mafioso R.C.s here. *Mock Tudor*. That guy might as well keep his boat in his front yard. No wonder she's been hanging around him. Jay. *Lughead* over there—I mean, with his *balls* falling out of his bathing suit? He's not wearing underwear." He cleared his throat. "Now that bitchy wife of his can *really* put 'em on a tray and smush 'em. I mean, gee, what a gigantic turn-on."

I'd noticed the same thing, had in fact silently rehearsed making one of several collegiate-sounding comments to my brother on the order of "You're losing something, pal," but I'd refrained, and then I forgot. Sam was right: at certain angles, in certain sand-straddling beach positions, Jay's glamorous balls dropped out of his suit for all the world to see. Did Jay know? If he knew, did he care? Francesca had no doubt seen them, too, but hadn't said anything, either. What was there to say? "Nice balls?"

"Give it a rest," I said finally. "They're *swimming*, for Christ's sake."

"She's darling, Sam," Mother called over. "Francesca. Like her a lot."

"I'm hardly going out with her," Sam replied, but he seemed pleased that Mother had perhaps picked up something amorous or lustful in Francesca's eyes that another woman might notice, even if that other woman was his mother. The subject of Jay and Francesca was dropped; when they



Pressoir

returned from their swim we ate lunch and broke open another bottle of wine. The sky was cloudless now, the overhead sun painful, and before long my neck and shoulders began to burn.

"So, Sarah," Mother said at one point, "are you absolutely *loving* the Northwest?"

"B-E-G-O-O-D, Sareeta," Sam said absently, staring up at the sky letters. "It says, 'Be good.' Uh-oh, Father's mad at us."

When Sarah didn't respond, Mother kept picking. "Whatever happened to that nice guy you were going out with? Paul. Why isn't Paul here?"

"Mr. Locksmith?" Sam inquired acidly. Paul Beyers was a recent boyfriend of Sarah's whose father ran a chain of spectacularly successful twenty-four-hour lock-replacement stores—Mr. Locksmith. That nickname, inevitably, stuck.

"That man could fix anything," Mother said, her voice grand, nostalgic, and a little husky, as though Mr. Locksmith *filis* were a towering figure of the twentieth century whom we'd all been lucky enough to brush up against. "I don't think I shall ever forget..." and she began a long, uninvolved story about some fuses that had blown one night and how Mr. Locksmith had borrowed her blue rubber kitchen gloves and disappeared into the dark basement, and before she knew it the house was lit like a riverboat restaurant.

Sarah finally looked interested. "Well, Mr. Locksmith was good at things like that. In fact, that's about *all* Mr. Locksmith was good at."

"Mr. Locksmith was *superb* at things like that," Mother said. "And I don't know why you put things like that down, Sarah. I love a man who knows what he's doing. Who's good with his hands."

The thought must have been in everybody's mind, not just in mine, that Mother's last comment somehow reflected badly on Father, who was not particularly adept with his hands, and who had spent most of his life bent over a desk.

"Nope, Mr. Locksmith's all gone," Sarah said, adding, "and Mel Gibson hasn't called. Not once. I'm so insulted. I guess I'm just a sad, pathetic old spinster."

"Oh, now, you are not," Mother said quickly. "Now, don't use that word, Sar—it's ugly."

A signal had been missed. Sarah had been joking. She'd assumed, I think, that no one could possibly take her words another way. But under the hot sun, along a familiar but almost unrecognizable beach, something had gone wrong. Mother, who sees Sarah rarely these days, and who hunts for clues to her life whenever she does, had taken her at her word. Sarah's expression turned suddenly, markedly unpleasant.

"Oh, I just want more grandchildren," Mother went on obliviously. "J.J. is so marvellous—he whets the appetite. I'm *spoiled*." She turned to Jay and said, "Thank you, darling, for spoiling your old mother."

Sarah spoke up, not realizing, I think, quite how savage she sounded. "I already *have* three children, Mother; I'm just keeping them away from you so they won't get *ruined* beyond belief."

"Oh, Sarah, how *mean*. That's so *mean* of you to say. I didn't ruin *you* all, did I?"

Sarah closed her eyes. "Mother," she said softly, patiently, "I'm not doing anything wrong with my life." She rose. "You think anyone who's thirty who's not married must be doing something wrong with her life. Well, I'm not. I'm just not. I'm *not* doing anything wrong with my life. My life is *great*." Pointlessly she added, "Mother, *you're* the one going off *gallivanting*." She was going to Tod's to get a Diet Coke; did anyone want anything?

No one dared place an order. That would have seemed to be taking sides. We watched Sarah disappear down the sand. She hadn't meant what she said—Mother, who had nursed our father uncomplainingly during the last ten years of his life, deserved pyramids and a good, free life now—but Sarah had said it; the deed was done. Sam, squinting at her retreating figure, said, "Well, she'd better hurry up and get married. See how incredibly bitter and hateful she's getting?"

"Oh, dear, now I've upset her," Mother said, staring after her. "Oh, dear." She turned to Caroline with a pinched face and took a drag on her cigarette and said, "I didn't mean to upset her, Car. What should I have done differently?"

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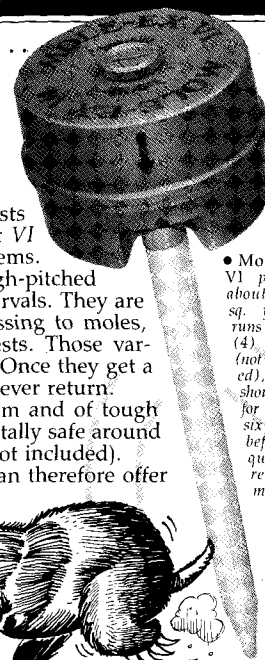
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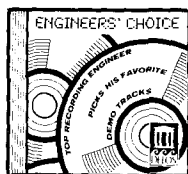
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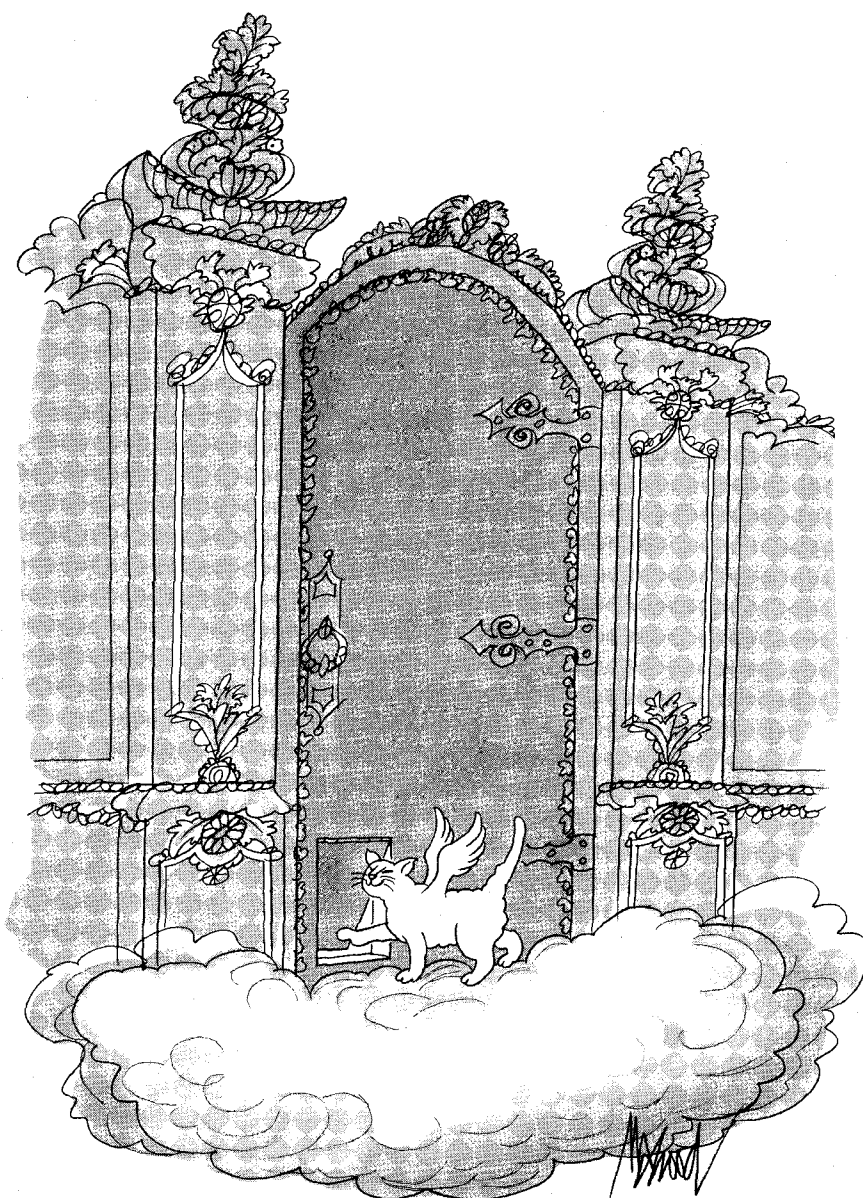
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moments of upset, expecting her to react with sage calm, as though we had an unpaid shrink on the premises—which in a sense we do. But Caroline, as a rule, does not stick her nose in our family dramas. Now she merely gave Mother a slight smile. “You should see me with my own mother” was all she said.

THERE are usually three stages involved in returning from the ocean, and that afternoon we honored all of them, though more in tribute to tradition than out of genuine enthusiasm. The first is ice-cream cones at the Friendly’s off the rotary, the second is a stop at Mill’s Lake (Piss Pond, as certain members of our family like to call it—a reference to its suspicious yellow plate-glass stillness) to wash off the accumulated salt, and the third

and final ritual is the outdoor shower. Built onto the side of the house near the kitchen stairwell, the shower is simple, even primitive: a sleeve-shaped stall with a peeling, light-blue lattice, after all these years still miraculously intact. Inside hang, and have always hung, the same objects: a length of old hose resting on a nail, several rusted gardening tools, a sticky brass soap dish, and a shelf of old bottles of Head & Shoulders and Johnson’s Baby Shampoo filled with assorted heights of old water. A spray jet sends the water down in a rapid, tortured, highly satisfying stream. “The best shower-head on the island,” Father used to brag.

Jay showered first; like many former athletes, he attaches an almost fetishistic importance to cleanliness. A half hour after he was done and was still

wandering around the kitchen shirtless, a towel around his waist, one hand buried in a box of Triscuits, Mother asked me to fetch two or three bottles of good Chardonnay from the cellar for dinner. First I went upstairs in search of some lotion, since my shoulders were burning from the sun, and then I trooped downstairs. When I snapped on the overhead light bulb, I was surprised to see the figure of my younger brother. He was standing on a toolbox, staring out of the dim, spiderwebbed window at the back of the room, and when the light came on, he whirled around.

“Jesus, you startled me!”

“What are you doing?” I said.

Sam looked embarrassed. “Getting wine. Getting *vino* for dinner.”

“In the pitch black?”

“Well, it’s gray, actually. I couldn’t find the light. Where is the light—oh, you got it.”

I told him I was on the same mission, and he mumbled something about great minds thinking alike. Then I noticed something I’d never noticed before, and it made me stop: the window Sam was peering out of looked directly into the outdoor shower. Through it now you could clearly see the torrent of water as it cascaded down onto the ground, and my wife’s bare ankles rubbing against each other. Sam’s eyes followed mine. When I came up beside him, he stepped off the toolbox and started jabbering about how dusty the cellar was. Where in the world was the Sunfish? And the wind-up Victrola? Everything had changed.

I wasn’t listening. I’d moved closer to him, and I could see my naked wife; it was a young boy’s view of a woman—strange, knee-high, mysterious. Through the narrow window I could see all the hot spots: calves, thighs, and (shifting my head sideways) the soap foam as it caught and wet-braided her pubic hair. For a moment I stood frozen in place, barely breathing.

Sam seemed anxious to leave. His voice was a drawl—bored, ordinary. “If you’re going to get the wine, Jam-Bo-Ree, then I guess I don’t have to, so I’ll—” But as he was passing I grabbed his wrist. He was right: the slender, slippery wrist was newsprinted black from Father’s old watch. His breath stank of beer.

“Listen,” I said. “I know what you’re doing down here—I mean, what,

did you have your hand on your dick the whole time?"

Sam tried to make a joke. "You mean, squeeze my *ley-mon*, mahhnn?" But when I didn't laugh and instead increased the pressure on his wrist, he tried to shake off my hand. "Don't touch me, I don't like being touched."

"Cut it out, Sam."

"What? Look, Jam, so I heard you coming down the stairs. And I got into place—easy, right? It was a joke. O.K., so a *dumb* joke, but—"

"Look, Sam," I said, "am I so goddam stupid that—"

"Well, I just don't know, buddy. I mean, you tell me." Sam's arm and wrist were relaxed under mine, but his eyes were hard. "Hey," he said, laughing, "your wife is very attractive and all, certainly, very *smoldering* and all, I mean, if a little *Rubenesque*, but, I mean, hey, Rubens is like my absolute *favorite* painter in the world, after all, no offense, next to, like, Andy Warhol, that is, but—"

"Stop it," I said, oddly calm. "Just stop talking."

Like a fishing line, his wrist suddenly jerked under mine, but I held on. "What do you want from me? I told you I was just down here getting *wine*. Wine, you know, *grappa*? So Mother can drink herself into a complete—Let go of me!"

I am no good at scenes or confrontations, but at that point I lost my temper and began yelling at my brother. I was furious; Sam's assaults on our family diminished all of us, and forbearance on my part seemed only to encourage brand-new violations. I kept hold of his wrist and shouted into his face, six inches from mine. I called him a name—"faggot"—I'd once promised myself never to use with him. "Knowing," I said cruelly, "your *extreme* sensitivity to that word."

I told him he was nothing more than a sleazy Peeping Tom, that what he'd done with the tape of our childhood voices amounted to an assassination, and that he should be thoroughly disgusted with himself. "Ever since I picked you up, you've been acting like a complete *shit*," I said. "If Father were here—"

"He wouldn't do a fucking thing, you asshole! He wouldn't even notice!" Sam looked near tears. I've always been able to make him cry, and I was perversely pleased that I hadn't lost the knack. "You're so pitiful, John! I feel

totally sorry for you! I think you're crazy! You're crazy and you're *pitiful*! You should get your fat, stupid wife to shrink you! You're just this brain-dead arid academic *psychol*!" And then he couldn't control his tears any longer and he ducked out from under my grip and ran up the cellar stairs.

What was the matter with all of us? Had we all died at the same time our father died? Disgusted and still furious, I left the cellar, completely forgetting about the wine. Passing by the porch, I could hear the hollow click of the Ping-Pong ball on the moldy, fir-green table. Upstairs I showered and changed for dinner—the outdoor shower was spoiled—and when Caroline came into the bedroom, her wet hair wrapped swami-like in a blue towel, her body wrapped in another one, I debated telling her about Sam. She seemed, impossibly, not to have heard us over the racket of the running water. But instead we started making love.

Whether it was the strength of the sun, or the island wind that brings on an extreme bone fatigue, or whether it was the scene I'd just witnessed in the cellar, and the idea of my brother observing my wife taking a shower, sex was hasty—uncoordinated, a disaster. When Caroline reached up to touch my back or my neck, the skin stung, and I snapped at her. Later, when we were getting dressed for dinner, I came up behind her and squeezed some skin on her side. "Puttin' on the pounds, eh?" I said.

"Am I?" Caroline said. "Am I getting fat?"

"Well," I said. "No, not really."

Caroline wasn't fat: she was just fine the way she was. I said I was sorry. "I was joking around," I said, aware of a dull, crumpled-up, sick feeling in my stomach, but my wife refused to meet my eyes. "You're not fat," I kept insisting. "You're *not*. I don't know why I said that. *I'm* fat." I sat down on the edge of the bed and took hold of my stomach. "*I'm* the fatty here."

DOWNSTAIRS, the sliding doors were open onto the bay. A stiff, battering breeze was blowing in from the narrows, and the wind-swollen screens were flapping. The confident buzz of a power saw droned from a nearby development, and I had an image then of my father, one as vivid

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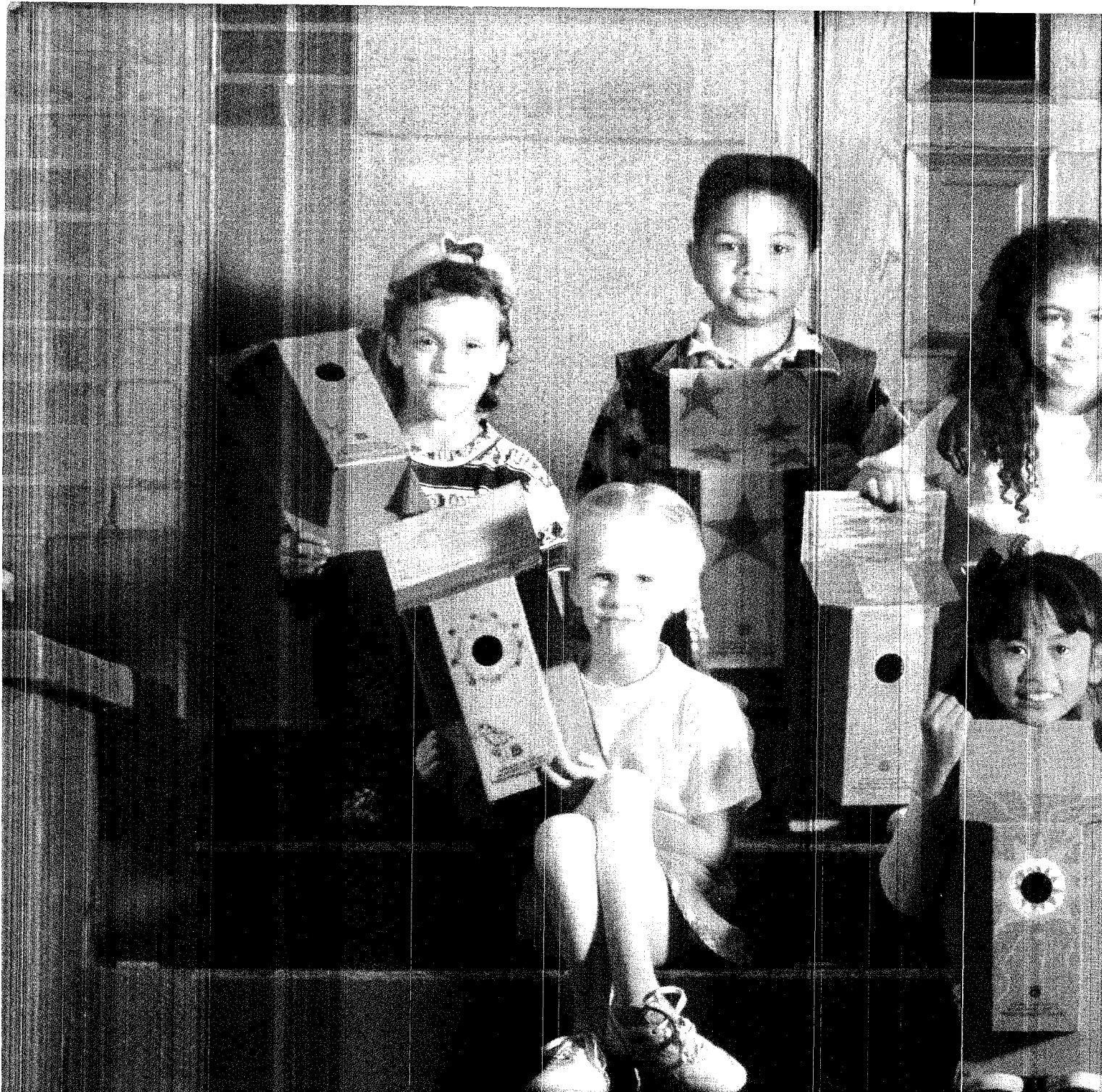
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as though he'd merely stepped into another room to get an extra ice cube: an image of him standing in front of the summer doors—large, red-domed head cocked, glass of wine warming in one big palm—and announcing with no room for contradiction that the wind was coming in from the northwest, or from the southeast, or whatever. How he knew this always struck me as a mystery. No flags or pennants waved from the hillsides. He'd call one or all of us over to the window, and when his audience was gathered, expecting a lecture or at least an interrogation, he'd gesture with a hand that took in the water, the shoreline, the sand, the boats from the nearby sailing camps, the whole view, whose very simplicity seemed like an opulence, and he'd look at us with great surprise—what were we doing there?—and say, "I just wanted all of you to remember this."

I missed my father: I think we all did. I found Mother in the pantry, preparing dinner, and I came up behind her and put my arms around her middle until my fingers were touching. I could feel her smile. "Jam," she said. "Hi."

I said, "You know those times when Father would say that such-and-such a wind was coming in from such-and-such a direction? From the bay?" She nodded. I let go of her waist. "So how'd he know that? I mean, did you all have some kind of rooster weather-vane hidden someplace that he'd look at every time before he'd say that? How do you get to know that?"

Mother turned. Her hands flew, dully shelling. "Air Force, I think," she said mildly. "From when he flew. You know about that. You know he was a flier. Navigator. That's how he knew. I think you have to know all about the wind if you're a navigator." Mother laughed. "Really, I don't know very much myself. I think I know about as much as you know."

"Well, you look great, Mother," I said awkwardly, after a minute. "Really, I think you look great. You're doing well for yourself."

"I'm doing fine," she said. "Fine," she repeated. "First year's almost over. One more season to go, and the first year'll be over." Mother was silent, as though counting off to herself. "Right?" she added.

That night she'd prepared what for Father's side of the family is the tra-

ditional July Fourth dinner—fresh, barely steamed peas from the garden, and a cold poached salmon. After dinner it was decided, by consensus, that we'd go watch the fireworks off Cary's Landing, about a fifteen-minute drive from the house. "Francesca's coming with us," Jay announced in the hallway. He seemed embarrassed; it turned out he'd offered her a ride earlier. "If it's all right with everybody."

I didn't think this was such a hot idea; I thought we'd had quite enough of Francesca for one day, but it was too late to back out. Jay asked Sam to call Francesca and tell her to meet us at the entrance to her driveway, but Sam refused. "I'm not going to call that airhead," he said. He mimed dragging an imaginary cloth through one ear and, finding no resistance, out the other. "You call her. She's *your* honeybunch."

"Sam," Jay said. "Sam..."

Mother, to my surprise, begged off. She said she never got to see her grandchild. Tonight she wanted to stay in and read to him. "In the attic I have all these wonderful kids' books I've saved for your children. Now make a wish on the sky for me. And when you come back we'll have our own little fireworks display." She returned from the pantry a moment later holding a shallow carton filled with various pink and blue sticks, cubes, and sparklers, all loosely tossed in together.

Jay and Doll went into the other room. I could hear them arguing. "I don't want to leave him," I could hear Doll say. "If he stays, then so do I. You just go off with your—" Her laugh was hard and transparently unhappy.

And my brother said, "Jesus Christ, what does it matter?" There: he sounded like a father—I knew it! And the door to their bedroom slammed shut. Yet when they emerged five minutes later it appeared that Jay had won; Doll merely kissed J.J. on the head and said she'd see him bright and early in the

morning. We all piled into Jay's station wagon.

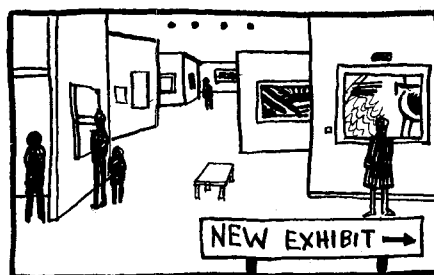
The night was moonless; the soft summer air reeked of skunk and salt, and when Jay switched on the headlights we could see the rabbits unmoving on the lawn. "Kill 'em," Sam ordered. Jay said nothing.

After picking up Francesca—she entered the car breathlessly, smelling of jasmine and mouthwash, and, because space was tight, proceeded to stack herself on Sam's lap—we drove the twenty or so miles to Cary's Landing. The parking lot was jammed with jeeps and cars and with couples and single men milling around, clutching beers. We got out of the car and took seats on our hood, in imitation of the other pilgrims, and at midnight the most spectacular display began: parabolas, circles, cones, and floral bouquets leaping up and dripping back down again. Francesca yelled, "Happy New Year, everybody!" and she kissed all the Knowles boys on the mouth.

Then Doll, quite out of the blue, burst into tears. No one knew why—nothing had preceded it—but Jay was quick to respond. He got down off the car hood and came up behind her and put his hand on her shoulder. Doll wasn't having any consolation. She pushed my brother away roughly, calling him a name, and got down off the hood herself and covered her face with her hands. Then she commenced a brisk waddle across the parking lot, trailed a moment later by my wife. Jay, standing there in the dark, stared after both of them with what seemed like revulsion.

"Boy, oh, boy, oh, boy, oh, boy," Sam commented. His back was pressed up against the black, shiny windshield, and he was holding a beer in one hand. "That gal must've been *profoundly* moved by the fireworks."

I wouldn't say that I didn't see Jay coming, but I was surprised and strangely exhilarated by how quickly he moved. He hit Sam twice across the face—so hard that the whole hood of the car seemed to resound. He'd used his open hand, and, on the backswing, his knuckles. The force knocked Sam partly off the car hood. The whole thing seemed to take only two astonishingly graceful seconds—and then Sam was lying on his back on the hard concrete. It was Jay's wedding ring that had done the greatest damage: Sam's nose and lower lip were bleed-



M. JAN

ing; there were red marks on both cheeks. I started over to help him up, but Francesca was there first. "What the hell's the matter with you?" she yelled at Jay.

My older brother leaned the heels of his hands against the top of the car and stared down at the sand-dusted pavement. He looked so much like a Knowles just then—so like our father and grandfather, in all the old photos hanging in the basement—that I wanted to burst out laughing. Yet when he spoke I realized I'd never again be sure of him. "Fuck you," he said to Francesca; his voice was low, horrible. "You don't even know us. Get out of here. Get out of here." Now he was shouting at her. "*You don't even know us.*"

I REMEMBER the night our father died. We all stood around in the back yard of the house, glasses of wine in our hands, toasting him. It felt so unreal—no one to call us back inside. For whole minutes it was fine, then I remembered again the word "dead," and the words "He's dead," which became the words "My father's dead," and it was then that I felt a sudden, amazed, unfamiliar tightness deep in my stomach—as though I were going to be violently ill. The night was cool; autumn was coming. The small, bright, audacious light glowing from the tiny cupola on the outer beach blinked once and then all we heard were crickets and the loping waves. We were silent for a long time. Then Sam glanced up into the bright sky and said, "So where's your basic star?" Someone asked him what he meant—maybe it was me, I don't remember—and he replied, "Well, for Chrissakes, when people die, you're supposed to look up at the sky, and then you go, 'My God! Hey, man! I've never noticed that star before! There, see? Over there. That new star must be *him!* Watching over us.' And there's no star. I don't see the star. So where's the star." It wasn't a question.

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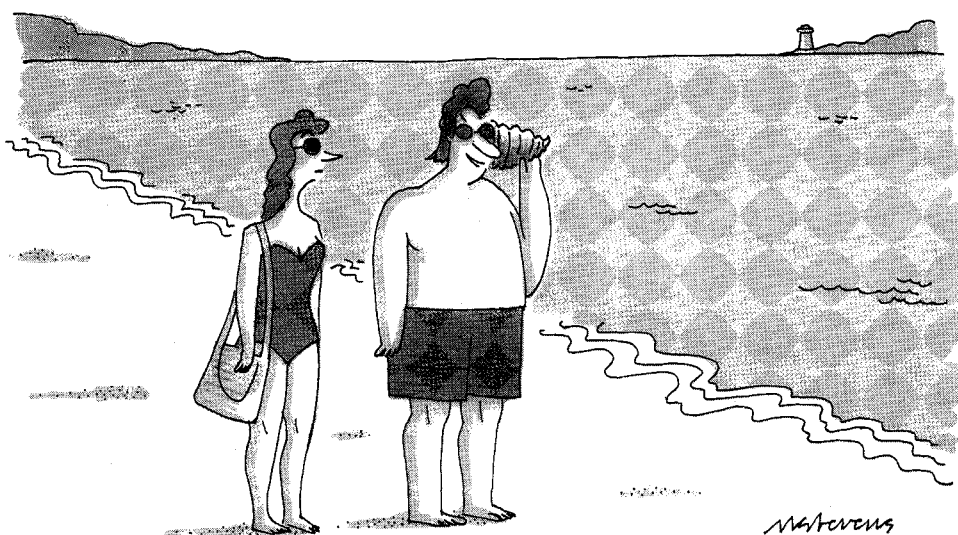
THE National Conference of Catholic Bishops holds its annual meeting in November, in Washington, D.C. The organization is one of many innovations that arose from the Second Vatican Council, which convened in 1962 and concluded in 1965. The intent of the Council was to move the Catholic Church away from a strict hierarchical authoritarianism, so that a "people of God" might inform the Church with its collective wisdom and spirit. Laypeople, once regarded as little more than vulnerable souls to be protected and saved, were now looked upon as the building blocks of new communities of faith, and the bishops of the Church—who had operated largely independently of one another within their various sees, in direct fealty to the Pope—were asked to band together in national conferences. In pre-Council days, there had been little need for bishops to consult with one another, because of the Church's rigorous uniformity: the same Mass, said in Latin around the globe, was emblematic of religious unity, and a point of pride, while a standardized doctrine demanded obedience and brooked no dissenting interpretation. The new national bishops' conferences were to be the means

of carrying out Vatican II reforms, and were also meant to provide a forum for bishops to present what the people in the pews were saying about current Church practice. With input from above and below, bishops could then best discern what God wanted of His Church at that moment in its history. Accordingly, in 1966 the American bishops voted to form two groups: the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which would attend to Church matters, and a parallel group, the United States Catholic Conference, to address secular issues.

After Vatican II, the Catholic Church basked for a time in the ecclesiastical equivalent of a Prague Spring. Mass was offered in the vernacular, and altars were uprooted and turned around, so that the priest faced the congregants. The private reading of the Bible by the untutored faithful, which had once been discouraged as a suspect activity, was now advocated. It became easier for priests and other religious to receive dispensation from their vows (if, indeed, they chose to take the formal route), and annulments of marriages became less remarkable and easier to obtain. Parish councils assumed many of the tasks that once only a pastor could perform.

Though the reforms persist, the atmosphere the Council engendered has changed dramatically, as a result of three events closely spaced in the long history of the Church: the publication, in 1968, of the papal encyclical "Humanae Vitae"; the election, in 1978, of Pope John Paul II; and the installation, in 1981, of a key member of the Curia. "Humanae Vitae," disregarding the advice of many medical experts and a number of Church theologians, reaffirmed the Church's ban on all forms of artificial birth control. Instead of receiving a resounding chorus of "Amen"s and "Alleluia"s from bishops around the world, the Vatican quickly discovered that its newly enfranchised middle managers could no longer be relied upon to toe the line, especially when confronted with an unpopular document built on a disputable theological foundation. The national bishops' conferences affirmed "Humanae Vitae," but the affirmations ranged from a firm "yes" to acknowledgments so nuanced by exceptions as to virtually neutralize the document. Several of the national conferences—in particular, those of the United States, Canada, France, and the Netherlands—held that the thoughtful, prayerful Catholic could disregard this teaching and still remain in communion with Rome.

And there was a change in the character of the Vatican itself, with the election of John Paul II, and his appointment of the conservative German cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. The new Pope's experience with national bishops' conferences had been predominantly with those of Eastern Europe, whose bishops prided themselves on their concerted opposition to oppressive Communist regimes while, ironically, accepting without question the edicts of Rome. The Polish Pope soon found that he had inherited many fractious and outspoken groups, America's among them. He could hardly disinherit or disband the bishops' conferences, but his task, as he saw it, was clear: to reassert the Pope's primacy as the sole source of authoritative teaching, and to once again standardize Catholic practice, which



"Hey! Applause!"

John Paul regarded as dangerously out of control.

The N.C.C.B. was perhaps the most vexing group. Bishops' conferences throughout the world are conducted with varying degrees of openness; a few are held entirely in private. But the N.C.C.B.'s meetings are open to the press—a press whose words and images are seen worldwide—and the Vatican realized that their influence was immediate and formidable. Rome could not openly control the N.C.C.B. agenda, but it could blunt the group's impact by casting all the bishops' conferences as merely consultative bodies and vesting more power in the Curia—a smaller body, whose members could be more easily watched over and swayed. Nearly three decades after Vatican II, the ecclesiastical power of national bishops' conferences remains unclear. Many prelates—Rembert George Weakland, the sixty-four-year-old Archbishop of Milwaukee, among them—consider the conferences an authentic teaching voice, an extension of the historic episcopal authority to teach the truths of religion. Cardinal Ratzinger, however, has baldly maintained that they have little, if any, ecclesiastical base and therefore no ecclesiastical power. In Ratzinger's view—which is shared, not incidentally, by his Pope—the role of the bishops' conferences is simply to fine-tune and promulgate policy, not to make it.

While the N.C.C.B. has at times been one of the most progressive of the bishops' conferences, it has always been characterized by conflicting interests. From the outset, there were those bishops who feared that the N.C.C.B. would weaken what had once been complete and unquestioned dominion in their home dioceses and impose a barrier between themselves and the authority conferred on them by Rome. These men felt that their allegiance to the Pope was primary and sacred, and they fought the conference concept, looking to Rome rather than to their fellow-bishops or to the people of their dioceses for counsel and guidance. When a controversial issue was under debate in the N.C.C.B.'s early days, the late Cardinal John Cody, of Chicago, for one, could rise to his feet and proclaim, "I was on the telephone just yesterday with the Curia about this, and they said . . ." For men like Cody, whose vision of the Church was one of centralized divine power—and for

a number of like-minded clergy who, moreover, aspired to Vatican positions—the hand of Rome was to be reached for and tightly clasped. Cody's open autocracy and bullying would be anathema in today's seemingly more consensus-conscious Church, but Rome's influence is felt in subtler ways, more and more frequently, as the Vatican seeks to regain control over what it considers a Church *in extremis*.

Never in the American Church's history have the beliefs and practices of the people been more at odds with the teachings that Rome espouses and local bishops are supposed to promote, the question of birth control being only the best known of many examples. Survey after survey has revealed that the majority of this country's Catholics, who number fifty-eight million, profess allegiance to the Pope yet refuse to live by his decrees, and the American bishops converging on the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington on the second Sunday of November last year for the N.C.C.B.'s four-day meeting were well aware of the disaffection in the ranks.

ARCHBISHOP WEAKLAND spent much of that Sunday in his room at the Shoreham, slogging through six hundred and sixty-two pages of documents containing the twenty "action items"—those to be voted on—and thirty-two "information items" on the meeting's agenda. To the casual observer, the range might have appeared quite broad: a statement on human sexuality, a proposal to allow laypeople to officiate at funerals, a report on ways to introduce "inclusive" (i.e., non-sexist) language into the liturgy, a proclamation to place feast days honoring the Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro and the Blessed Juan Diego (two men on their way to sainthood and especially venerated by Mexican-Americans) on the American Church calendar. But to Weakland it was largely a study in clerical housekeeping, and tardy housekeeping at that. Years before, the Milwaukee archdiocese had adopted inclusive language. In the sensitive area of gay rights, Milwaukee had, in essence, ducked a major controversy. In 1988, after the Vatican moved to ban the Catholic homosexual group Dignity from holding public Masses, a suburban Milwaukee church that had been holding such Masses instituted one that

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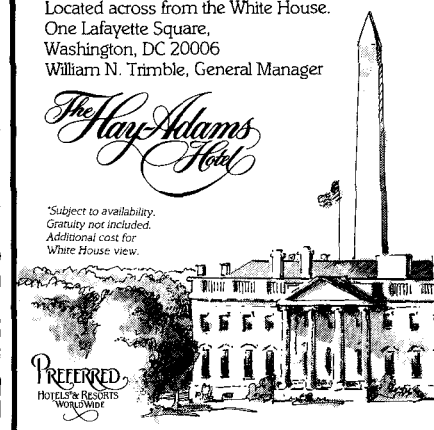
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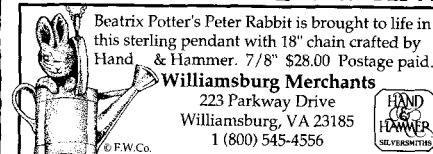
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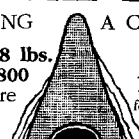
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gays consider their own, although it is not held under the Dignity banner.

One of the most controversial issues facing the American Church was not even on the agenda. A proposed pastoral letter on the status of women in the Church, which had been in the works for seven years, had been so roundly criticized for its tepidness by both liberals and conservatives (Weakland had recommended scuttling it outright) that it had been sent back to committee. Weakland had commissioned a study in 1982 on the status of women in his archdiocese, and he had subsequently integrated women into virtually all levels of church work there. Not a man to fight public battles he has already privately won, the Archbishop knew that he would have little to say at the meeting.

That morning's *New York Times* had carried a story by Peter Steinfels, the newspaper's senior correspondent on religious matters, about the Vatican's refusal to approve an honorary degree for Weakland from the Theology Faculty of the University of Fribourg, which wanted to recognize the Archbishop for his central role in the drafting of a pastoral letter on the American economy that the N.C.C.B. had issued in 1986. Steinfels noted that the Vatican, in barring the university from awarding the degree, had asserted that Weakland's "statements on abortion had caused 'a great deal of confusion among the faithful,'" and the article continued:

Last spring Archbishop Weakland held hearings with women in the Milwaukee archdiocese to gather their views on abortion. In a widely publicized report after the sessions, he upheld the Catholic teaching that abortion is immoral but warned that the anti-abortion movement was driving away potential supporters, including Catholics, who viewed its focus as narrow, its tactics as aggressive and some of its rhetoric as "ugly and demeaning." [Weakland] added that his hearings had revealed "how far the gap is between the official teaching" of the church prohibiting the use of birth control and the views of "some very conscientious women."

He also stated that moral principles could not be a matter of law unless they enjoyed "a consensus of the population."

Steinfels further noted, "Symbolic rebukes like this one are often used by the Vatican to show who is in the good graces of papal officials and who is not. Bishops are considered to be the successors of the first apostles, and direct papal measures against them are unusual."

On forays through the Shoreham's lobby that day to take a break from his

reading, Weakland was approached by a good many of his fellow-bishops who had seen the story. All were supportive, as was to be expected; more remarkable was the undercurrent of astonishment at the Vatican's clumsy handling of the matter. During one such excursion, Weakland saw New York's Cardinal John O'Connor across the Shoreham lobby. Although he knows O'Connor reasonably well, he made an effort to avoid eye contact, more because of embarrassment than from any discomfort of his own. Weakland had heard from a colleague that the *New York Post* had called O'Connor—a militant opponent of abortion—the day before to say that unnamed Vatican sources had suggested that input from him had helped to jinx Weakland's Fribourg degree. Upon spotting Weakland, the Cardinal rushed across the lobby to him and took him aside. "I want you to know that I had absolutely nothing to do with this, Rembert," he said gravely, keeping hold of Weakland's arm as he spoke. "It's libellous, downright libellous, I tell you!"

Weakland gave O'Connor's hand a pat and smiled. "Don't be worried about it, John—I'm not," he replied. Moments later, to another prelate, Weakland observed with a laugh that he had made the *Times* twice in one year for doing nothing: first for listening to other people discuss abortion and now for not receiving an honorary degree.

But that evening, as he and I sat together in the Shoreham's lobby, the full impact of the Vatican's refusal seemed to have sunk in. He was hardly morose, and he didn't seem resentful; he evinced, instead, a certain bewilderment. "I feel a little bit like I've been raped," he said. "I feel dirty, and I don't know why."

Did he believe O'Connor's protestations?

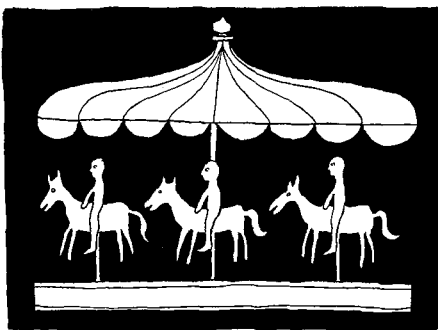
"I have no reason to doubt him, but"—he gazed somewhat bemusedly

across the lobby, which was filled with more men in black suits than the hotel would ordinarily see in a full year—"I didn't hear him say anything about my getting a raw deal. Or anything about standing with me on this."

ALTHOUGH there were briefings and committee meetings throughout Sunday, the conference officially began with a concelebrated Mass in the hotel's Palladian Room on Monday morning at eight o'clock. Some three hundred of the nation's bishops were present, and they were an impressive legion as they stood shoulder to shoulder before their gray metal folding chairs, row upon row of purple zucchetos, with a sprinkling of scarlet zucchetos (denoting the rank of cardinal), on heads bowed in prayer. Their deliberations would take place in three-hour sessions over the next three mornings and afternoons—sessions allotting minimum time for the consideration of each issue, in order to cover the maximum number of issues.

The sessions took place in the hotel's cavernous Regency Ballroom, which was brilliantly lit to allow complete live coverage by the Eternal Word Television Network. The bishops were seated at long tables set up at angles, like so many ribs of a fish (an arrangement that called to mind the ancient symbol of Christ), all of them in regulation black suits, some with their pectoral crosses tucked into shirt pockets, so that only a few links of gold chain hinted at the power that those symbols of office represent. The picture of catholicity was somewhat skewed, however: there were only a few black and a few Hispanic faces among them, and no Asian faces at all. Basically, the N.C.C.B. reflects the composition of the American Church a few decades ago—largely Irish, German, Italian, and Eastern European. Nonetheless, when the meeting began any monolithic quality that might have been projected to the world outside was soon dispelled. These were individuals, each with his own understanding of his job, his own "management style," his own attitude toward the power structure in Rome, his own political beliefs and leanings, his own concept of the pathways to holiness.

In the first working session, on Monday morning, the temporal and immediate intruded on the eternal and spiritual in the form of the Persian



Gulf crisis. At that time, American troops were poised in Saudi Arabia but had not yet engaged the Iraqis in Kuwait. Archbishop Roger Mahony, of Los Angeles, asked for fifteen minutes at the podium. As the head of the United States Catholic Conference's International Policy Committee, he had already sent Secretary of State James Baker a letter in which he voiced his concern that "the pressure to use military force may grow as the pursuit of nonviolent options almost inevitably becomes difficult, complex, and slow," and he urged the bishops to accept the letter as their statement against war in the Gulf. For some, like Bishop Michael Kenny, of Juneau, Mahony's bold action—which had earned him the displeasure of his fellow-conservatives, who could usually count upon Mahony and now felt betrayed—was not bold enough, and a much stronger letter was needed. Kenny, boyish-looking in the midst of so many gray-haired and balding men, told the tall, patrician Mahony that if their Church had no compunctions about condemning abortion it should offer equally unambiguous guidance on this serious moral

question. For others, like Boston's Cardinal Bernard Law, to send any sort of letter opposing war was to ask too much of the nation's leaders at a time of crisis. Law, a huge, white-haired man whose gentle voice would often be heard throughout the conference, coming over the public-address system almost as an intimate whisper and often granting the liberal point of view before propounding his own, suggested that further debate be confined to the bishops' single executive session—a closed meeting, to be held Wednesday afternoon—and that the conference move on. Law's motion seemed to fail in the voice vote that followed, but, curiously, when written ballots were called for, it passed. With this halting exchange, the meeting got under way, having relegated to private reflection a matter that was then at the center of noisy public debate.

With action on the Persian Gulf postponed, the bishops turned back to the affairs of their state. The first significant debate came on Tuesday morning, on a measure that would permit laypeople to preside at funerals when a priest was not available. Such

a practice is provisionally allowed by canon law; a regional conference of bishops need only ask Rome for the exception. Many voices were raised in a now familiar complaint: priests are overburdened to the point of exhaustion and ineffectuality by the plethora of rituals that only they are entitled to perform. Nevertheless, Pittsburgh's Bishop Donald Wuerl came to the podium to tell his colleagues to stand firm—that new vocations would come. Wuerl, whom the Vatican once sent to Seattle to temper Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen's efforts to liberalize Church practice, is a telegenic figure—a rising young hierarchical star who has his own television show, on which he occasionally wears a short purple cloak called a mozzetta over his bishop's cassock, with its red piping and brilliant red sash, evoking for some viewers memories of the glory days of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. He spoke of how "precious" the priesthood was, and how the proposed measure would "send out the wrong signal" both to the faithful and to prospective seminarians. Robert Banks, the new Bishop of Green Bay—whom the Pope had

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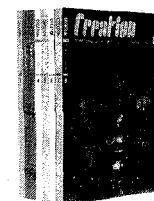
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appointed in disregard of the candidate Weakland had recommended—took the floor to reinforce Wuerl's argument. Weakland himself, in the first of three short appearances at the microphone, took the opposing view, speaking in favor of allowing members of the laity to officiate and noting that this was common practice in Brazil, where in some parishes one priest may be responsible for as many as fifty thousand people; laypeople bury the dead, he explained, and their pastors offer a weekly Mass commemorating all the recently deceased. In the end, the vote was 136 to 113 against any change, the American bishops, in essence, voting to be even more conservative on this issue than Rome itself.

After each of the sessions, reporters buttonholed bishops who had spoken out on what appeared to be the most newsworthy items, or sought out bishops they knew personally, who might thus be disposed to give them a statement. The Archbishop of Milwaukee, however, was not sought out. He said little on the floor, and, not being one of the more outspoken proponents of either the liberal or the conservative side, his usefulness was deemed marginal by the press. His only sustained interchange with journalists came in a Monday-afternoon press conference on a trip that he and three of the other bishops would make later that week to El Salvador. In attendance were most of the print reporters covering the meeting, as well as an EWTN crew and two crews from local television stations. Weakland began by stating the reasons for the journey: "To show our solidarity with the people of El Salvador, with the Jesuit community as they commemorate those who were murdered, with our fellow-bishops in El Salvador, and with the refugees in Chalatenango province, which we will visit." But a forthcoming trip to a Central American country afflicted with chronic problems was less newsworthy, as far as the reporters were concerned, than the denial of Weakland's honorary degree from Fribourg.

Yes, Weakland acknowledged, he had criticized the tactics of the anti-abortion movement rather strongly; no, he was not advocating abortion.

How did he read the Vatican's refusal?

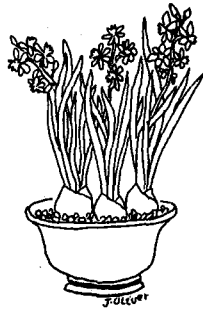
After reflecting for a moment, he called it "the first test case" of a document issued by John Paul earlier that fall which asked Catholic universities and theological schools to limit their dissent to Rome's teaching to "dissent in your heart."

Was he surprised by the denial of the degree?

"Yes."

Disappointed?

"Yes. And," the Archbishop added, "if I were the president of a Catholic university I'd be a little bit nervous. I'd be looking over my shoulder. But I think that's the role of a bishop—to say it as you see it."



As the conference unfolded, it seemed almost as though there were two meetings in progress—one of a few dozen active, vocal participants and another of some two hundred and fifty men who were merely tolerating the goings on. Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk, of Cincinnati, the N.C.C.B. president, ran the sessions with emotionless efficiency and precision, chiding the balky and untidy who sought to stray from the agenda ("Bishop, if we are to take up the Persian Gulf further, can you tell me what item or items we will cancel?"), and issuing breathtaking parliamentary pronouncements ("Am I correct, Bishop, that yours is an amendment to the amendment on the floor, which, in turn, amends the original amendment?"). The Archbishop of Milwaukee sat impassively some three or four tables back from the podium, occasionally making notes in the margins of his set of conference papers. Infrequently, his eyes would flare wide open and his eyebrows would arch, sending a gentle ripple up his forehead. As I had come to know, this was evidence less of exasperation than of an attempt to clear his mind, to force it not to wander further. He was not alone in his ennui. Archbishop Hunthausen, a slightly rumpled man who had battled the Church over more than terminology, looked tired and somewhat wistful, as if he were attending the wake of a beloved old seminary instructor who had once been instrumental in his life. Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, an auxiliary of Detroit, who had recently returned from Baghdad with some two dozen American hostages, sat reading the *National Catholic Reporter*,

Commonweal, and a sheaf of position papers on hot spots in Central America and the Middle East, as if he were still upstairs in his room.

The document on inclusive language, which had gone through seven drafts by the time the conference convened, had suffered a withering assault in committee, as salvo after salvo of amendments was fired at it by concerned prelates. On the floor, the disputation continued. Could the bishops agree that "the feminine pronoun is not to be used to refer to the Person of the Holy Spirit"? Or that "discriminatory language should be eliminated from translations insofar as possible whenever it is unfaithful to the meaning of the sacred Scripture, but the text should not be altered to adjust it to contemporary concerns"? One of those who wanted "appropriate language" to be maintained was Archbishop Anthony Bevilacqua, of Philadelphia (some six months later, he and Archbishop Mahony would be elevated to the rank of cardinal), who scrutinized every jot and tittle of the document with a proofreader's diligence, his owl-like eyebrows bent over dark, deep-set eyes. After a last barrage of amendments had been offered and voted down, the document was accepted. It provides guidelines for liturgical prayers and scriptural readings which will result in "fidelity to the word of God" while keeping exclusively male references to a minimum.

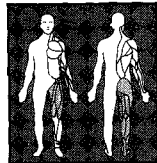
An uncharacteristically passionate interchange took place during the debate on the document entitled "Human Sexuality: A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning." The document reasserted the Church's condemnation of any means of artificial birth control—a point that disturbed men like Bishop Kenneth Untener, of Saginaw, Michigan, who seemed on the verge of tears as he proclaimed that the issue had cast the Church as "a dysfunctional family that is unable to talk openly about a problem that everyone knows is there." In a debate on a section of the document concerning "persons with a homosexual orientation," the bishops reaffirmed a 1976 pastoral letter holding that "homosexual [persons], like everyone else, should not suffer from prejudice against their basic human rights. They have a right to respect, friendship, and justice. They should have an active role in the Christian

community," and noted that "such an orientation in itself, because not freely chosen, is not sinful." A bloc of the traditionalist bishops balked at this, arguing for inclusion of a document issued in 1986 by Cardinal Ratzinger's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which held that "although the particular inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin, it is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil; and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder." But here, in the end, the more moderate bishops prevailed, and the citation was relegated to a footnote. It was an artful compromise, soothing both the Vatican and those bishops who bridled at such pejorative language.

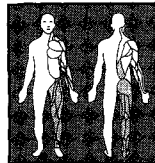
As I wandered about the press-room during one excruciatingly languid segment of the debate over inclusive language, I met one of the living legends of Catholic journalism—Father Francis X. Murphy, a Redemptorist, who, as Xavier Rynne, reported in the mid-sixties on the inner workings of Vatican II for this magazine. Father Murphy is now seventy-seven, gray-haired, with a well-trimmed goatee. "The hand of Rome, my boy, the hand of Rome. That's what's happening, for God's sake! Just say it!" he huffed after I offered a rather guarded appraisal of the degree of initiative shown by America's bishops. "Rome will always try to push its own agenda. But what continually surprises me these days is why the American Church doesn't learn from other national churches. The French, the Germans, the Belgians have from time to time told the Vatican to bug off, and they have had some effect. You have to continually stand up to the guys in Rome, or they'll plow you right under. If twenty-five American bishops were to gather together and issue a statement proclaiming that they would no longer be dominated by Rome, it would be over. They would have their autonomy, instead of allowing the ecclesiastical twerps, the sycophants in their midst, to have such a disproportionate say."

I asked two people about Father Murphy's proposition. One was Bishop Raymond Lucker, of New Ulm, Minnesota, a handsome, rather ascetic-looking prelate in his mid-sixties, whom I met at a cocktail party for the press—an event intended to provide an opportunity for prelates and press to mingle

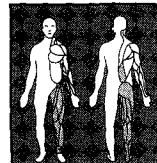
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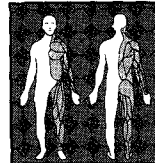
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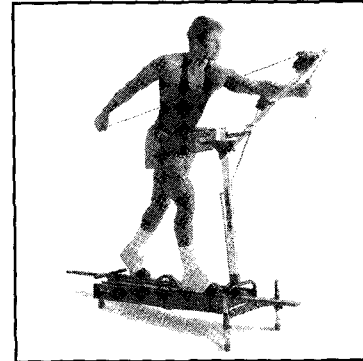
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informally. It featured cheese and crackers, an open bar, many reporters, and precious few bishops. Like Weakland, Bishop Lucker was appointed by Pope Paul VI and has had his difficulties with Rome in the years since.

"Why don't twenty-five of us stand up?" he replied, with a genuinely puzzled look on his face. "I honestly don't know. This is our home—we can't burn it down. This is our mother—we can't defy her. We were trained to be loyal. You don't shake that, even if you really dislike what Rome does to you personally. Somewhere—and I never knew exactly where or when, because there is no due process in these things—I offended Rome, and I continue to pay for it. Maybe it was eleven or twelve years ago, when I issued a pastoral, with another Minnesota bishop, on women's role in the Church, which made the point—very strongly—that sexism was sinful. Now, we didn't get out and wave a banner for women's ordination, or anything like that. Or maybe it's because I'm one of the few bishops belonging to the Catholic Theological Society, which asks questions that the Vatican Congregations are not always happy to hear. Whatever it was, word came to me through the grapevine that I was in disfavor, and that I was going nowhere from New Ulm. In the hierarchy, even a lateral move is considered a sign of approval, so Rome has punished me for speaking out in the most effective way it could. I was a threat to Rome; therefore, I was to be marginalized."

Lucker fell silent for a moment, gazing into the middle distance. "There is a mind-set in Rome holding that change is wrong and frightening, that to raise questions is in itself a challenge to the authority of the Pope and to the integrity of doctrine," he continued. "For those in power in Rome, the Church is not 'the people of God' that Vatican II talked about. It is an imperial monarchy that must maintain absolute control. In such a system, those in charge can exercise raw power, because their judgment is automatically correct and they need not worry about the consequences. They have to be right; that is the highest aim, good, object. And, conversely, error has no rights. So if you are deemed to be in error Rome feels that it has the duty

to punish you. Withholding approval for Weakland's degree, keeping Lucker in New Ulm. That kind of stuff. Now, all that said, utterly dispassionately, what happens? How long can I be concerned only about this Church as my home, and not about the people who are being hurt by it and leaving? I ask myself that almost every day."

Another view came from Father Thomas Reese, a Jesuit whose 1989 book, "Archbishop," is the most complete contemporary treatment of the selection and functioning of the American Catholic hierarchy. "These men, regardless of their differences, are team players," he said. "Whether or not they have any power, the mythology of the magisterium—the authentic teaching voice of the Church—must be maintained

at these meetings. But can you imagine what a strain that puts on a man? To have to go through the charade of brotherhood with the only peers that you have? To lead two lives—one at home and another here? For a man like Weakland to be well accepted in his archdiocese and a respected national figure, and yet to be regarded by his superiors as a man with no judgment?"

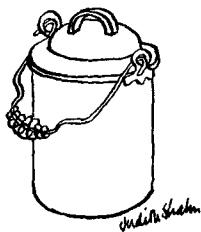
Outside the general sessions and various committee and regional meetings, there was time for two staples of convention life: shopping, and getting away from the convention. For the bishops, the shopping was of a specialized sort. In the Shoreham's suite 340, P. J. (Pat) McDermott displayed a line of clerical clothing and vestments, offering one-stop shopping for virtually everything a bishop might need, from alb to zucchetto. Sharing the suite was Paul Sullivan, who was there to help new bishops select a design for a coat of arms, which his company would then supply. As for recreation, on Tuesday night Archbishop Weakland bowed out of his customary annual dinner with Milwaukee priests studying canon law in Washington (this year, there were only two) and instead went out to dinner with the family of a cousin of his who lives in the Washington area. Other bishops were out that night, too, for pleasure or for professional reasons. When I returned to the Shoreham later in the evening, I saw one of them, a man who is among the most vocal of the young tra-

ditionalists. He was staggeringly drunk, and had a wonderful, almost beatific smile on his face, quite unlike the expression he customarily wore during the general sessions.

The vaunted executive session on Wednesday was not under the confessional seal, and within minutes of its conclusion it was not difficult to find out from any number of bishops what had gone on. There had been two significant occurrences. A stronger letter opposing United States involvement in the Persian Gulf was to be sent—over the objection of a group of bishops led informally by Cardinal Law, who maintained that men of religion should not impose their views on those enmeshed in a difficult political situation. Law's persuasiveness was limited—and, in fact, suspect—given that he had spent the previous weekend at Camp David with the letter's intended recipient. And Bishop James Malone, of Youngstown, Ohio, had requested the floor to speak on behalf of the Archbishop of Milwaukee. Malone had previously asked Weakland if he might say or do something about the Fribourg incident, and Weakland had replied that Malone might, but that he would prefer that it not take the form of any kind of statement or resolution, since this would require the issuance of a document, and the only logical recipient would be the Vatican. "You never win on those," Weakland told Malone. In the executive session, Malone said that he, and perhaps his fellow-bishops, would like to register "moral support for Rembert at this moment." The response was a sustained standing ovation.

The conference ended early on Thursday afternoon. Steinfels' analysis in the *Times* was that while America's bishops had stood up boldly against war in the Persian Gulf, their division between liberals and conservatives had confined them to "nibbling on the edges of internal troubles." The bishops had blanched at significant doctrinal changes—changes that American Catholics seemed to want, some of which were already openly or covertly practiced in certain dioceses. An enormous, yearlong effort had produced a thick volume of documents whose intended audience might well ignore them.

AN arena of more tangible battles, where casualties are not simply bruised egos or stalled careers, lay



before the Archbishop of Milwaukee as a TACA Airlines jet climbed into the morning sky outside Washington the following day, banked, and headed southwest, toward El Salvador. Talking about the past few days and looking ahead to El Salvador, the Archbishop was his usual forthcoming self—forthcoming, that is, once he had read his breviary, something he always does at the beginning of a flight. The psalms feed his soul and calm his nerves. Though he has flown hundreds of thousands of miles, he is still terrified of flying. He calls it the great penance of his life.

"The N.C.C.B. is a strange group," he said. "It is theological in the deepest sense, in that we, the prime teachers, come together to discern how best to lead our people. And then there is a little of the Mafia in it, too. *Omertà*. Conspiracy of silence. Never criticize each other in public. You are not just an individual there but part of a college of bishops, and you have to take into account how what you say will affect your peers. You come away with a great sense of togetherness, but it is essentially false. We are not united, in the way a monastic community is. Back when I was at St. Vincent's abbey, we would break out the beer after a tough meeting and regroup, trying to lay aside our differences and go on. Bishops don't get that chance. We are thrown together for a few days once a year, given an enormous agenda, and expected to somehow develop a bond. We've tried informal retreats—no agenda, just spending time together. The first one, in Collegeville, Minnesota, a few years ago, seemed to break down some barriers; you could begin to relate as human beings rather than as Church executives. But then for the second, in Santa Clara, some of the key players—like Law, and O'Connor, and Archbishop Francis Stafford, of Denver—didn't attend, and Roger Mahony just dropped in briefly, so there was really no point to it.

"If I were the N.C.C.B. president looking out over the assembly, I think I

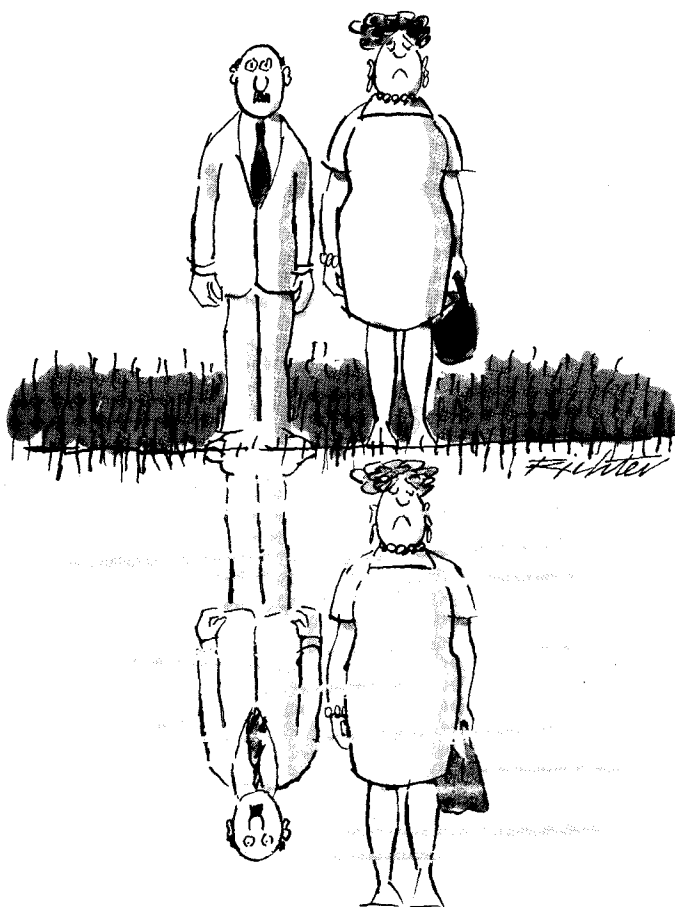
would have a profound feeling that these men do not have their hearts in it—that they want to go home and run their dioceses as they darn well please. And why not? You quickly learn that these public meetings are not the place to make policy. You make policy at home, quietly. You try to move things there, not in Washington. If I can ever get the third section of my pastoral letter on the priesthood together, I think that it might serve as a good example. For some of the bishops who have spent no time in Rome, there is a mystique about the place, and during these national meetings they tend to fall back on Rome in matters of theology. 'Will Rome be pleased?' they ask themselves. I spent thirteen years in Rome; the Vatican is demythologized for me. It is not the repository of truth and right thinking that some make it out to be—not at all. I know what happens in the back rooms there, so, frankly, I spend little time forecasting what Rome may think. But I have to hand it to the Vatican. It has been successful; it has sent a chill through the American Church. Take Hunt-hausen—Dutch, we call him. Rome broke him, and the point was made that anyone who follows in his footsteps will be similarly broken. The

implied message is 'If you stand up to us, you're going to suffer.'" (Archbishop Hunthausen recently announced that he will leave office in August, on his seventieth birthday, five years before his mandatory retirement date.)

Weakland ordered a bourbon before lunch. Afterward, as we sipped our coffee, I asked him about loneliness, which is often mentioned as a reason so many priests are leaving clerical life. How much more of a problem is it for a bishop, who sees his peers only a few days a year and then spends most of his hours with them in formal meetings?

"Loneliness is an easy way of talking about it," he answered. "It really comes down to celibacy, don't you think? The trick in dealing with celibacy is to understand that there is no true substitute for the intimacy of marriage. We were taught that the Divine Office, your community, your prayer life were substitutes, but they are not. Travel, an intellectual life, and, in the case of a bishop, a measure of authority, power: these are not substitutes, either. I'm over sixty—for me, it's not about sex. When it hits me hardest is not when I'm in trouble or want to pour my heart out because I'm depressed. It's when I have a great idea that I'd like to share with someone, when I've heard a new piece of music and want someone to sit down and listen with me. My trip to Russia last summer: I have no one—nobody on the same wavelength—with whom I can talk about what I saw, what I felt. That's a burden I have to live with. While I see the great merit in celibacy—the freedom it gives you—perhaps there are people who can't make that sacrifice. And yet we continue to demand that they do—if they want to be priests. Across-the-board celibacy works to our detriment as a Church.

"Men who leave the priesthood because of the loneliness are not weak. They are simply good men who have fallen in love with good women. If we are alive, we are continually falling in love. You



asked me once if I had ever fallen in love. Yes—at twelve, and most recently at sixty-four. I'm falling in love all the time. When I was in my forties, the women I found attractive were usually twenty years younger. Now that's changed; age means nothing. I find intelligent women, whatever their age, extraordinarily enticing—intelligent women who are not afraid of me, who are interested in me as me, and not because I'm well known. But I am aware of when I'm falling in love. It's dangerous ever to think that all that is over with—that you won't fall in love again. I have to be on guard not to let my emotions run away, not to make excuses to see someone who has set off the spark. So far, I've done pretty well."

Our discussion at an end, and El Salvador closer than Washington, the Archbishop took up a novel (one of Jon Hassler's depictions of Midwestern Catholicism), and later, in the final hour of the flight, managed a brief nap. As the senior prelate, he was heading the ten-person delegation, which included, besides the three bishops—Walter Sullivan, of Richmond; Ricardo Ramirez, of Las Cruces; and Carlos Sevilla, an auxiliary from San Francisco—two priests, a nun, a lay worker, and Eileen Purcell and Oscar Chacon, who work for SHARE, the Salvadoran Humanitarian Aid, Research, and Education Foundation, which organized the visit. Recent events, both in El Salvador and in the United States, had conspired to make this a crucial time in the ten-year-old war between the Salvadoran government and the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front—the F.M.L.N. The pretrial judicial investigation into the brutal murder, the year before, of six Jesuits, their housekeeper, and the housekeeper's daughter by Salvadoran Army soldiers was dragging on and on, and the murders and the ineffective investigation had severely eroded support in the United States Congress for the government of President Alfredo Cristiani; indeed, barely a month earlier Congress had made the first significant cut in military aid to El Salvador. Negotiations between the Salvadoran government and the F.M.L.N., begun during the summer, had stalled, and both sides had resorted to their old tactics. The F.M.L.N. was threatening another major offensive, randomly attacking Army units; its mortar at-

tacks on power pylons were causing unnerving blackouts in one part of El Salvador or another almost every night. Meanwhile, the Army was stepping up its own terror campaign: mutilated bodies were again being found, and suspected F.M.L.N. sympathizers were disappearing. The offices of newspapers and human-rights groups were being ransacked or bombed; people living in rural areas thought to be F.M.L.N. refugees were being subjected to harassment by the military.

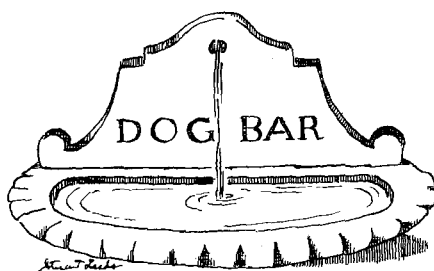
At a late-afternoon briefing at Catholic University the day before the delegation left Washington, Weakland had listened pensively as Ms. Purcell—an intense, dark-haired woman in her thirties, who was SHARE's executive director—gave the delegation a rapid-fire summation of what they could expect: "This is a country at war. Fighting can break out at any time, any place. If you find yourself in the middle of a combat area, hit the ground. Wait for word to stand up. Do not go out on the streets alone, even in daylight. Stay with the group. Realize that any telephone you use could be tapped. We will be going into Chalatenango province, in the north, to visit Father Jon de Cortina and some of the resettlement areas there. This has been the scene of some of the worst fighting over the years. I think all of you are aware that Father Cortina was shot at just a few months ago. I don't think anything will happen. If anything did happen to four American bishops, the outcry would be more than the present government would want to face. Largely because of the Jesuits' murder, American support for the government is slipping, and the country's leaders know it. In a way, they have to let us in. But we are suspect, because we will be going into conflict areas—areas controlled by the F.M.L.N. We will be stopped at military checkpoints. We may be searched. The military will make it as hard as they can for us to move about. The government doesn't want us to come, and some elements

of the Salvadoran Church would be happier if we stayed home. But the people want us. Just so you know. And," she added, "if you are arrested, try to stay calm. We'll find you; you won't be detained long."

As the abbot primate of the Benedictines from 1967 to 1977, Weakland had visited monasteries in many countries, but he had gone into a combat area only once before—in 1968, when he visited Saigon and Hue. While he did not welcome the thought of doing so again, he knew that this was a visit long overdue. Milwaukee parishes supported the work of Father Cortina in Chalatenango, and he felt that he needed to demonstrate his backing for that work. When the Archbishop went to bed that night, in a Catholic University dormitory, he was apprehensive; when he thought further about what was ahead of him, he realized that he was actually afraid.

Although SHARE had tried twice before to bring Weakland to El Salvador, the trips had been cancelled at the last moment because the political situation had become too volatile. But now, with a commemorative Mass scheduled to mark the first anniversary of the Jesuits' deaths, priests and bishops from many countries were converging on San Salvador, and the government had little choice but to grant entry to the SHARE delegation. Ms. Purcell correctly calculated that it was not in the government's interest to refuse permission to one of the largest contingents of bishops ever to visit El Salvador from the country that had provided more than four billion dollars in economic and military aid in the previous ten years. Because she had a group of high-level American churchmen to offer, high-level meetings had been arranged: one with President Cristiani; another with Colonel René Emilio Ponce, the Defense Minister; and a third with the American Ambassador, William Walker. A clandestine meeting with the F.M.L.N., while not on the itinerary, was a possibility.

What Weakland and his fellow-bishops hoped to impart to each side in the tragic war—which had by then claimed perhaps seventy-five thousand military and civilian lives—was the urgent need to resume peace negotiations. And the trip had a second, equally important purpose—one that only men of their ecclesiastical stature could hope to accomplish. While El Salvador is a



country with a strong Roman Catholic tradition—ninety per cent of the people are at least nominal Catholics—the Church is having an extraordinarily difficult time maintaining its credibility there. Over the past decade, as openings for bishops occurred, the Vatican had appointed men of neutral or pro-government sentiment; in effect, it was sending a message to those in El Salvador who favor an activist social gospel—a gospel that would necessarily overturn the financial hegemony held by a dozen or so families and maintained by the military—that the Church was to be neither a staging point for revolutionary activities nor a haven for those involved in the struggle. Basically, the Church in El Salvador was to get out of politics and back to saving souls. Though the Salvadoran Church is probably best known as the Church of Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was murdered in March of 1980 for speaking forthrightly about the needs of his country's poor and their oppression by the oligarchy and the government, it has largely not carried on in Romero's tradition. The allegiance of most of its bishops is to the Pope and the Church, and not to a national movement. (Central America's only cardinal—Miguel Obando y Bravo, of Nicaragua—is a man less than sympathetic to revolutionary movements in the region and to the liberation theology that fuels them.) While the circumstances in which the American Church finds itself are much less dire, Weakland recognized the similarity of the response from the Vatican: bishops and cardinals in the United States, too, were being chosen for their orthodoxy and their loyalty to Rome, and he had consistently maintained that the Church was the poorer for it. A major reason for his visit was to show his support for Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, who succeeded Romero, and who has continued to speak out against the carnage and the economic inequities.

OUR arrival at the San Salvador airport, early on a steamy afternoon, went without a hitch; the only sign of the military was a single soldier, in full battle dress, with an American-made M-16 cradled in his palm and a look of boredom on his face, who paid no attention to us as immigration officials perfunctorily checked our passports and visas. We were then driven to Centro Loyola, a

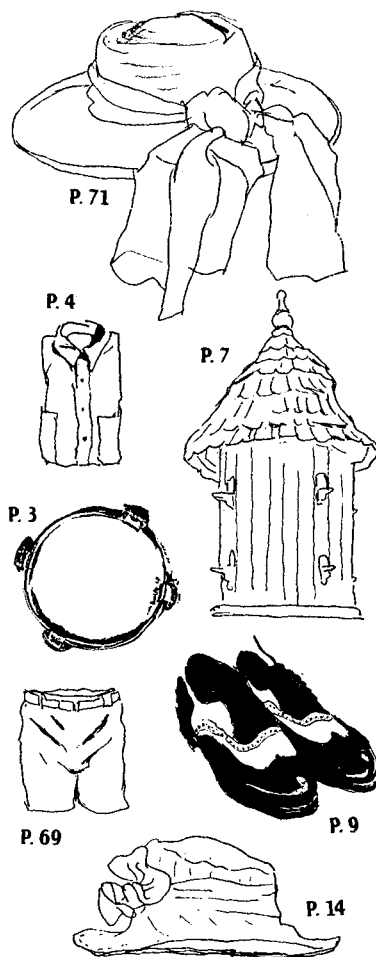
Jesuit retreat house and conference center nestled in the foothills on the outskirts of the city, where most of our delegation would be lodged.

Four hours later, we joined the other clerical delegations, at the Universidad Centroamericana. In a large assembly hall behind the university chapel—a chapel where the six Jesuits had often said Mass, and where they are now buried—some two hundred priests (many of them Jesuits) and fourteen bishops and archbishops vested for a memorial Mass. Almost all wore red stoles over their white albs, and the hall was thick with daubs of dazzling color as the men moved about—a scene reminiscent of the concelebrated Mass at the bishops' conference in Washington, except that here the color stood not for the primacy of office but for the sacrifice of martyrs' blood.

The mood was hardly sombre, however; many old friends renewed acquaintance, and when Archbishop Rivera y Damas arrived, Weakland greeted him with a warm *abrazo* and spoke to him in passable Spanish. Rivera y Damas, a handsome, stately man with jet-black hair and olive skin, said little in return; he seemed overwhelmed by the roomful of fellow-clerics. "He invited no one from abroad," Weakland told me, as we stood to one side and watched others greet the Archbishop of San Salvador. "But you can see he's happy that so many came. It must be hard for him to live up to their expectations. Will he be another Romero? Does he want to be?"

The politics of religion in El Salvador was quickly apparent as the members of the hierarchy took their places on an enormous outdoor stage. El Salvador has eleven bishops, but only three in addition to Rivera y Damas were present: Eduardo Alas, of Chalatenango; Rodrigo Orlando Cabrera-Cuellar, of Santiago de Maria; and the San Salvador auxiliary, Gregorio Rosa y Chavez. When Archbishop Weakland asked Rivera y Damas about this later, he said, "I don't know—they may have been afraid they would be booed when they were introduced." Immediately after the murder of the Jesuits, Rivera y Damas had pointed to the military as culpable. Other Salvadoran bishops had criticized him for what they considered a rash judgment, and had flown off to Rome—reputedly

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IN STILLNESS

1.

I see you sitting in stillness last winter,
your figure composed neatly, as if by a painter;

and quietly toward the night, the afternoon, evening
light rises and fades, rolling over the details

in your room, each day shrinking, and the night
longing after the small wintry sun trending west.

At six, when your lamp flares on the desk, steadies itself
on its lead foot, the perspective alters, is reversed.

Pausing at the door, I am drawn in. I hover
behind your back, a visiting shape. From the shut window

darkness draws us, inside out—repeating the study,
your books, our intent figures onto the black glass.

I see you working in stillness, the order of the room
increases without adjustment, steadily increases,

and the room tenses. And we are braced.

I think of you writing, and the pressure of your hand.

You are making a translation—truthful, careful
words, word by word, your reflection steady,

your green lampshade a tiny furnace, your mind burning
in the heat of pursuit. After a word. Spoken. What

was it? Your voice. Testing stillness, trial of a word
makes stillness more still with listening.

One page is turned, your thought travels over the turn,
decided; we breathe slower and sit near.

2. AND OUTSIDE

like a wind rising, a cloak swirling, its silent
hem furling, unfurling, dragging at the legs,

that threat paces the street, hesitating at each stoop,
the quickening of sickness in your heart's blood;

I know you know a fearful opposition, mounting
floor after floor after floor after floor, the ten turns

turning the five landings of your particular stair,
like a Gothic beast, you said, the heaving approach,

and when it lodges behind the kitchen wall that wall
weeps a sensation of its sick terror, whining, scratching,

and then as if it were that same beast howling
in the voice of your neighbor's hound you rouse

your stumbling body, you pound the plaster, enraged,
driving home this murderous, careless brutality

in league with mortal illness disturbing your peace.

—JEAN ALICE JACOBSON

at the government's expense—to repeat their complaints to the Pope.

In front of the elevated altar, a crowd of three or four thousand spilled out across a broad field at the center of the campus. Hundreds of people from Chalatenango, the country's northernmost province, had arrived the day before and had slept overnight on the grass. "The Jesuits spent much time in the villages of Chalatenango," one of the local priests told me. "In one way or another, all these people knew them."

As the Mass got under way, a night breeze began to rustle the leaves of the tall eucalyptus trees ringing the field, but it was still quite hot, and the celebrants perspired beneath their vestments. At the offertory, eight small apothecary jars were brought to the stage and set on the altar, each labelled with the name of one of the victims: Elba Ramos; Celina Ramos; Fathers Amando López Quintana, Ignacio Ellacuría, Juan Ramón Moreno Pardo, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Segundo Montes Mozo, and Joaquín López y López. Within the jars were soil, dried grass,

twigs, and other matter soaked with blood, which had been collected from the site after the bodies were removed. Archbishop Weakland—a man who prides himself on keeping his emotions in check—was startled to find that his body was covered with gooseflesh.

The next day, after a morning spent at the joint military high command tediously duplicating paperwork that had already been filled out in order to obtain a *salvaconducto*, the delegation set out on the Via Dolorosa that Church people who come to El Salvador customarily take. The most recent additions to the tour—which grows longer with the years and the deaths—are a walk through the Jesuits' residence, a visit to a small museum beside the chapel, and, finally, a stop at a grassy area behind the residence, where most of the bodies were found. Father Jesus Sario, the Jesuits' local director of religious formation, recounted the events of the night of November 16, 1989, in a voice so measured and lacking in any trace of the maudlin that he might have been describing an exhibit of pre-

Columbian art. Soldiers had massed on the edge of the U.C.A. campus that night, he told us, and had shot into the air, simulating a pitched battle with F.M.L.N. guerrillas, who had launched an audacious offensive in San Salvador a few days before. It was a moonless night, and in the darkness about seventy troops divided into two units and moved on the residence. Some battered on the front door—a sturdy one, made of metal—and one of the Jesuits eventually opened it, imploring the troops not to destroy it. The other group negotiated a network of paths and passageways between campus buildings (a route of such intricacy that it indicated that the operation had been well planned and practiced), scaled a fence, and approached the residence from the rear.

The two women, Elba and Celina Ramos, were killed first. Ironically, they had been spending the night there for safety. The soldiers shot both of them in the head and then put their M-16s under the women's dresses and virtually disembowelled them. Five of

the priests were marched or dragged outside, and there they were shot. The sixth—Father López y López—hid under his bed, and was killed on the spot as soon as he was found. Photographs in the museum depict the violence of the slaughter—Father Ellacuria's brain is on the grass, eight inches from his head—and also a certain serenity. Father Martín-Baró's legs are crossed at the ankles, in relaxed fashion. He was killed with a single bullet to the head, and Father Sario conjected that he had waited for his death patiently. A Bible had been cut nearly in two by a burst from an automatic rifle. A picture of Oscar Romero had been perforated by a bullet; another was scorched by an incendiary white phosphorus, and the frame had melted, forming two long plastic teardrops on either side of Romero's face, which was almost obliterated.

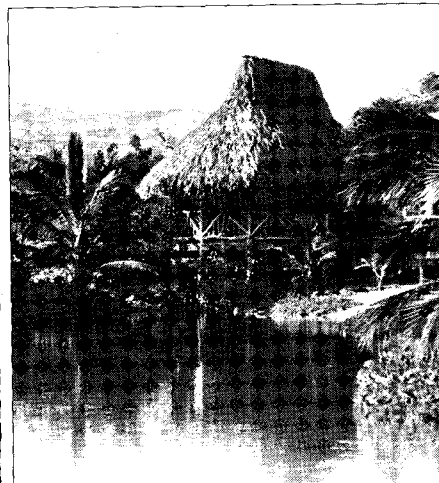
Beside a roped-off area in back of the residence, where six red and two yellow rosebushes commemorate the deaths, Archbishop Weakland led a short prayer for peace in El Salvador. As the group was leaving, he fell in step with Oscar Chacon. "Why would they do it?" Oscar asked, repeating a question from another member of the group. "And why like this? By blowing their brains out, the military were trying to kill the priests' ideas. These were the most visible members of the Jesuit community, and by killing them the military was saying to anyone who opposes it, 'We can kill you, too.'" Archbishop Weakland nodded. Oscar, a soft-spoken young man, is a native Salvadoran, and he had seen many of his childhood friends killed in the past decade. When he thought that the four prelates were out of earshot, he said to me, "So much of it is psychological. You never know when or how you might get it. Basically, the government's message was 'Don't fuck with us or you're dead.'"

Later that afternoon, the delegation was taken to Archbishop Romero's tomb, in El Salvador's National Cathedral. The sarcophagus was covered with dozens of small marble plaques attesting to miraculous favors granted to those who had prayed to Romero. As daylight faded, we drove across town to the Carmelite Chapel of the Hospital of the Divine Providence, where Romero was killed. A single .22-calibre bullet fired through the open chapel doors from a

parked car some two hundred yards away had pierced Romero's heart. One of the Carmelite nuns escorted us through Romero's home, a simple three-room cottage nearby. In a glass-enclosed closet was the alb he was wearing when he said his last Mass; his blood had dried into long dull-brown streaks on the white poplin garment.

As we were getting ready to leave, the lights in the Carmelite convent flickered and went out. Blackouts had become a nightly occurrence, and the nuns carried flashlights as matter-of-factly as they wore their rosaries. The air was suddenly thick with the sound of helicopters. They were unmistakably close, but we couldn't see them; they were flying low, behind the trees, and presumably without lights. Oscar had heard on the clandestine F.M.L.N. radio station that there had been military activity in the south and east of the country. Forty-eight casualties had been reported—a tally whose accuracy Oscar said could not be trusted but which did indicate that extended combat had taken place. In the distance, on the outskirts of the capital, came the sporadic, muffled thuds of mortars exploding. The F.M.L.N. offensive appeared to have begun, and that night's sleep for the Archbishop was even more fitful than it had been on the eve of the trip.

The next day was Sunday, and that morning Weakland, Sullivan, Ramirez, and Sevilla concelebrated the eight-o'clock Mass with Archbishop Rivera y Damas at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, in downtown San Salvador. It was this Mass that had formed the cornerstone of Romero's ministry, since it was the one place where an accurate portrayal of the week's events and the government's activities could be given uncensored. Romero's sermons at the eight-o'clock Mass had, in effect, signed his death warrant. Six weeks before his assassination, in a talk at the University of Louvain, in Belgium, entitled "The Political Dimension of Faith," Romero summed up what he had been saying week after week in San Salvador: "Christian faith does not separate us from the world but, rather, submerges us in it. . . . The Church is not an élite but, rather, a follower of that Jesus who lived, worked, struggled, and died in the midst of the city. . . . When the Church inserts herself in the sociopolitical world in order



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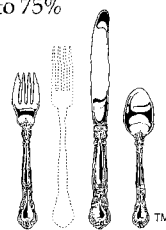
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to cooperate in bringing about the emergence of life for the poor, she is not undertaking a mere subsidiary task, or something outside her mission, but is witnessing to her faith in God, and is being an instrument of the Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life."

As they moved in procession down the main aisle of the basilica, Weakland and the other American bishops were surprised to see several local television camera crews set up in front of the Communion rail. Print and radio journalists stood ready with their tape recorders to record the sermon, which was to be given by the San Salvador auxiliary, Rosa y Chavez. The auxiliary bishop's sermon proved an interesting combination of indignation and prudence, by a man who had come to office as a political and theological conservative—the Vatican's hoped-for antidote to Rivera y Damas—and then had been profoundly shaken by the Jesuits' deaths. This morning, although condemning the violence against the Jesuits and the ineffectual investigation of their murders, Rosa y Chavez noted that "we did not agree with everything the Jesuits did"—an apparent allusion to their contacts with the F.M.L.N. and their work in pro-rebel villages. Most of the members of the delegation who understood Spanish were distressed at this, and so when the press corps asked for a post-Mass press conference Weakland quickly agreed. The journalists, however, asked a series of rather anodyne questions: reasons for the visit, impressions of El Salvador, and so forth. They had heard that a meeting with President Cristiani was scheduled for the following Tuesday. What would the visitors be telling Cristiani?

Weakland knew that his remarks would reach the Presidential palace before he did. "Surely, we will say that the talks must continue between the government and the F.M.L.N., and the murders must be solved," he said. "But all of that could have been said before we came here. We will know better what to say to the President after we talk to the people—after our trip to Chalatenango, which begins today." The Archbishop was advocating peace, and he was also—by putting the trip on the record—taking out some term insurance on his life.

BEFORE our departure for Chalatenango, we paid a visit to Monsignor Ricardo Urioste, the vicar-

general of the San Salvador archdiocese and pastor of San José Calle Real. The parish, partially supported by SHARE, is in a poor neighborhood on the outskirts of the city, and provides basic medical care to some twenty-two thousand people; there are no other medical facilities in the area. Shortly before noon, all of us except for Bishop Sevilla, who was to fly on to Guatemala the next day, boarded a van for the trip north. The road was paved only as far as the provincial capital; we would be driven there in the van and then switch to rough-terrain vehicles.

As Eileen Purcell had anticipated, the drive went slowly. The province was only about fifty kilometres north of San Salvador, but the trip took the rest of the day. At each of four checkpoints—heralded by speed bumps and fortified with sandbags, some of which had been in place so long that they were sprouting weeds—soldiers with blank, hard faces that belied their youth swaggered toward us in deliberate slow motion, checked our documents, and made what were probably simulated calls to the military high command. Their palpable suspicion of the three prelates bordered on disgust. The bishops, who were used to at least a modicum of deference and respect, found themselves abruptly recast as meddling do-gooders—those who aid the enemy and make the war even more difficult to fight.

When we arrived in the provincial capital—a town of some twenty-eight thousand, named after the province but popularly known as Chalate—Bishop Alas was waiting for us in his chanery, which was no more than a few rooms in a small attached house on one of the streets leading to the center. Alas took us a few doors down to a local restaurant, where we had a huge lunch of fried plantains, chicken, tortillas, and beans. Then we climbed into four-wheel-drive Toyotas and set off on a cobblestone road to the north, only to find that it ended abruptly just outside Chalate's business district. The track that lay beyond was impassable to all but pedestrians, mules, or the sturdiest of vehicles. In the years before rebel troops took to the mountains here, the road was well-kept enough to carry ordinary cars and buses. It had since been allowed to deteriorate into a roiling stew of upended rocks, washed out by the torrential rains that fall half the year. A road in this condition is both

a tactic and a political statement: this road led to F.M.L.N.-controlled El Salvador; the government's aim was to deny the rebels and their civilian supporters easy movement within the province or to its capital, whose Army barracks the F.M.L.N. periodically assaulted.

As the roadway tossed us about like so many rag dolls, Archbishop Weakland, in the lead Toyota, listened attentively to Alas, who was doing the driving. "I know what a hardship this is, but we feel your shoulder beneath our burden," Alas said to him, in Spanish. "It is bad here. If you say you are from Chalatenango, you are automatically a guerrilla. If you are a Christian, you are a guerrilla. Many of the people here had to flee the bombs, and in the process they lost their identification papers. They go to the government, and the government says it has no record of them. They cannot vote, they cannot move about, because if they move about without identification they are considered guerrillas and they are shot. Or they disappear. And these soldiers—ahh." He sighed, and tightened his grip on the wheel. "I gave many of them their first Communion. Humble boys, good boys. And now they are taught to be dominant over their own people. A woman goes to market in Chalate and brings back a pound of fish for her family and a pound for her sister, and the soldiers confiscate the fish, saying it is intended for the guerrillas. We cannot bring in batteries. Or medical supplies. The suspicion is that everything goes to the guerrillas. So where can the people turn? Only to the Church—only the Church remains. But priests are killed. I am threatened all the time. And the people wonder if the Church stands with them. *Muy, muy malo.*"

Our objective, reached after an exhausting hour-and-a-half ride, just as the sun was setting behind a mountain ridge, was a village once called Corral de Piedra and recently renamed Comunidad Ignacio Ellacuría, in commemoration of one of the murdered Jesuits. The delegation was greeted by a throng of campesinos, their barefoot children, many dogs, several ducks, a pig or two, and a priest, Father Jon de Cortina. Father Cortina was beaming as the members of the delegation disembarked and attempted to brush the road dust from their clothing. A thin, angular man with fine features be-

speaking an aristocratic Spanish lineage, he was the head of the Engineering Department at U.C.A. On the night of the massacre he was in Chalatenango doing parish work, and so he was spared. He subsequently decided to carry on his priesthood principally by living and working with the province's poor rather than by teaching U.C.A. students—young Salvadorans who are tired of the ongoing conflict, are largely politically conservative, and tend to back the government.

Because we were so late arriving, Father Cortina had completed the first part of a community Mass, but while it was still light he and his parishioners were eager to take the *Norteamericanos* in hand and lead them to Comunidad Ellacuría's Station of the Cross on the Salvadoran Via Dolorosa.

The village, like the others in the area, is poor. Most of the peasants live in mud huts with thatched roofs. And so, on the afternoon of February 11, 1990, as government mortars began falling on the outskirts, heralding yet another ground assault to flush out the F.M.L.N., some of the residents ran for protection to a small brick building used for grinding corn. They were seen by the crew of a helicopter gunship. Although the ground commander radioed the gunship that no F.M.L.N. had been found, the gunship hovered over the building and, once the people were inside, blasted it with machine-gun and rocket fire. One man and four children were killed, including eleven-year-old Isabel and two-year-old Vilma Beatrice, daughters of Maria Lopez.

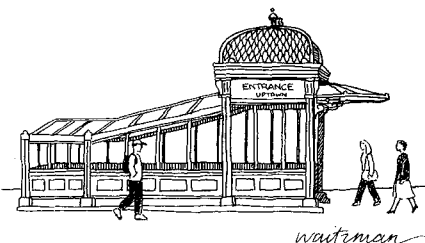
The building had been cleared of rubble, but it had not been repaired. The inner surface of the wall that was least damaged had been smoothly plastered, and a mural had been painted on it, depicting the helicopter, guns ablaze, swooping down against the backdrop of an orange ball of sun. Bouquets of wilted flowers lay at its base. Archbishop Weakland gazed at the mural in silence. As we stood on the spot where children had huddled screaming at the deafening explosions

and praying for their lives, I found my thoughts drifting back to the Children's Mass that the Archbishop had offered on a serene October morning at Our Lady Queen of Peace, in Milwaukee. There, in a majestic church, children had recited an Our Father, in firm, confident voices; here children had crouched on a dirt floor and uttered frightened pleas that for some went unanswered.

At dusk, the American clerics vested and, together with Father Cortina and the villagers, marched in a silent torchlight procession around the village perimeter, and then to a low wooden building with a corrugated-tin roof. This was the village hall, church, and gathering spot, and there the Mass resumed. At the offertory, Maria Lopez brought to the altar two plastic bags containing clothes that her daughters had once worn. She then held out her arms, offering her youngest child, with whom she had been pregnant at the time of the attack. "You can kill us, but we do not die," she said. "New life will always spring up." The baby had been named Vilma Isabel, in memory of her sisters. As I looked about me, I could see dozens upon dozens of young children, many women, and some old men, but no men between the ages of fourteen and fifty—at least, none who were not physically impaired. Only when the village was enveloped in darkness did young men emerge from the shadows of the mud huts and the surrounding jungle. Young, sound men in a village such as Comunidad Ellacuría know that they can be shot on sight.

At the conclusion of the Mass, the president of the village council read a list of the names of villagers who had died at the hands of the military. It was a litany not unlike the list of the Church's early martyrs in the Mass—a recitation so familiar that many Catholics hardly hear it. In the Mass, it is Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus. Here it was Ananabal, Blanca Linda, Dolores, Isabel, Vilma Beatrice.

We were invited to one of the houses in the village for a supper of pasta, tortillas, and refried beans. The meal was served on the veranda, at a long table, and while we ate—by the light of a candle held by a young boy—Father Cortina told us about his ambush, and about the peace march into Chalate that may have provoked



it. Some two thousand campesinos had gone with him, and when they reached the city the military forced all the residents and merchants to bolt their doors. "There we were, out in the open, no place to go, surrounded by the soldiers," Father Cortina said. "They had guns. We were chanting 'We want peace.' Perhaps it was foolish, but we cannot just sit here—nothing would change if we did. In El Salvador, to be a committed Christian is not allowed. To seek justice for those who are abused and murdered, to try to provide food for the hungry and medicine for the sick—this is considered subversive, political, because if you try to help the poor you are automatically in opposition to the government. It's very dangerous just to have a picture of Romero on your wall or a Bible in your house."

"Funny, isn't it?" Archbishop Weakland said. "The Vatican always understood the political dimension of faith in Poland, but—"

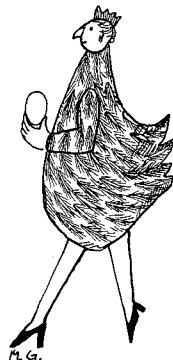
"Not down here," they said in unison, and laughed.

"So what we do," Father Cortina continued, "is work in tiny ways, so that these people are not forgotten. It is not about politics, or liberation theology, for goodness' sake! It is just being the Church. That is why it means so much that you are here. You are a sign of the Church—a sign that we are not alone, forgotten. Salvadoran bishops don't come here, but you have come." Father Cortina lit a cigarette. He smokes more than two packs a day. "I could die so easily that I'm not worried about this," he will usually say when he is advised to quit.

We drove to the village of Guarjila, five kilometres away, to spend the night in Father Cortina's residence, a two-room cinder-block building about twenty by thirty feet, with a tin roof and a concrete floor—luxurious accommodations, by Guarjila standards. Thin mattresses were arranged on the floor of the larger room for all the visitors except Archbishop Weakland, who, as the senior prelate, was given an aluminum cot in Father Cortina's room. As we were getting ready to go to bed—something that required little preparation, since most of us would be sleeping in our clothes—Father Cortina stamped the heel of his sandal on the floor near the front door, then

nonchalantly kicked a huge dead scorpion outside. "They usually come in twos," he remarked, and the Americans looked warily about them. Just then, as the Archbishop leaned against the doorjamb, something fell onto the front of his shirt, and he flicked it off. Stepping forward, Father Cortina ground a second scorpion into the floor. Few of us were relieved, however.

The first stop the next morning was San Antonio los Ranchos, a village that had been abandoned nine years earlier by its six thousand residents after the government effectively levelled it and burned the surrounding countryside in order to deny the F.M.L.N. cover and food. The jungle has since reclaimed the hillsides, which are again verdant and overgrown; and the village has been resettled by about twelve hundred of its former residents, many of whom had fled across the



border to Honduras. The church in San Antonio los Ranchos—once an elegant white adobe building in the Spanish-colonial style—was the village's most substantial structure, and had served as a refuge during bombings and strafings. The façade was still intact. Archbishop Weakland walked through the portico and back into brilliant sunshine, in what had once been the narthex of the church. Stubby fluted bases marked the spots where stone columns once rose to support the ceiling. Children climbed the pocked and crumbling walls and watched us, wide grins on their faces. Father Cortina showed us a piece of steel shrapnel that had been recovered after a bombing run. It weighed about forty pounds, and was five feet long, about eight inches wide, and two inches thick, with one edge sharpened; it looked much like the blade of a giant rotary lawnmower. Some of the dozens of teeth on the other edge had broken off, as they are designed to do while the steel blade whirls about after the bomb explodes. Each tooth, travelling at high velocity on its random path, can easily kill.

One of the villages the delegation visited, little different in appearance from a number of others we saw, must remain nameless. We had been there about an hour and were sitting in the shade drinking lukewarm Cokes when a man in a white T-shirt, carrying an

M-16, strode across the plaza toward a row of low buildings on the far side. This was not the arrogant saunter of a government soldier; the man's movements were at once cautious and relaxed. Once we had seen him, we began to make out more people in the shadow of the buildings that fronted on the plaza. There were men and women, carrying M-16s and Russian-made AK-47s; ammunition belts were strung over their shoulders and around their waists. Most wore dark-brown, khaki, or black shirts and trousers. (Because it is a hallmark of the F.M.L.N., as well as effective camouflage for night patrols, black cloth cannot be sold in Chalatenango province.) The message had somehow been transmitted that the bishops wanted to hear all sides during their mission of peace and solidarity and would not refuse a meeting with the F.M.L.N.

The meeting took place in a small room overlooking the square. A young man with a machine gun resting across his knees sat outside the door, and, inside, the Archbishop of Milwaukee sat down across the table from an F.M.L.N. commandante. Bishops Ramirez and Sullivan sat on either side of Weakland; the rest of us waited in the shade on the concrete veranda of a nearby house.

"I immediately noticed three things about him," Archbishop Weakland told me later. "When we shook hands, his were not those of a peasant, but soft hands, with long fingers and clean, trimmed nails, and when he looked at me there was no trace of cockiness about him. He spoke perfect, cultivated Spanish. He gave me his *nom de guerre* and apologized immediately for not telling me his real name. I sensed early that this was not going to be a Marxist-Leninist lecture. Yet he was extremely idealistic; he reminded me of *Benedictine novices I have known* who have such good hearts and think the world should be perfect. He wanted a better life for the people, but he was in no way trying to convince me that what he was doing was right. He knew that it was, for him. That came through strongly. But there was a pronounced melancholy about him; this was not the life he would have chosen for himself. You can tell when people reject each other's ideas, and that didn't happen here. What he needed was a sounding board, someone who would not judge him or comment on what he was



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saying but just let him talk, so that he could hear himself. In that way, I guess I'd have to call it a pastoral visit. He made the point more than once that the Church is not their enemy; many of his men are Catholic. He never asked me to try to stop the American aid that goes to the government forces he fights. There seemed to be little to talk about in the present, so I asked him if the F.M.L.N. would be part of the political system once the war was over. And he said, "That is the great question."

The meeting had taken no more than a half hour, and soon we were bouncing about in the Toyotas, on the bumpy ride back to Chalate. We decided to stretch our legs there before resuming our journey south, so a group of us walked around the town and past the Army barracks, which dominates Chalate's principal square. It was heavily fortified and covered with camouflage paint. A few soldiers disconsolately stood guard at the entrance, and the watchtowers were manned; there was no other sign of life, and the complex had the air of a forgotten outpost. We later heard that four hours after we left Chalate the barracks was attacked by F.M.L.N. mortar fire. The attack was followed by a pitched battle in the streets, in which eleven civilians were reported to have been killed.

THE remainder of the trip back to San Salvador, thanks to the perfunctory nature of the military checks in this direction, took only a third as long as the journey north. Before leaving Chalatenango, we made a stop at a vast cemetery on the outskirts of Chalate, in order to visit the graves of Sister Ita Ford and Sister Maura Clarke, two Maryknoll nuns who, along with a lay worker from Cleveland named Jean Donovan and an Ursuline nun, Sister Dorothy Kazel, were murdered by Salvadoran troops in 1980; their murderers have never been tried. As we drove on into the city, Bishop Sullivan leaned over to Archbishop Weakland and patted his arm. "Rembert, hard to realize that just a couple of days ago we were honestly spending a lot of time debating whether to use 'person' instead of 'man,' or whether laypeople should be allowed to preside at funerals," he said. "Isn't that something?"

Weakland put his hand on Sullivan's. "I honestly don't give a damn what

words we're supposed to use," he said. "Or who says them, or who votes for what. Get the poor souls in the ground, and say some prayers over them, that's what matters."

The dust of the road had permeated the interior of our vehicles again, and by the time we had worked our way through the evening rush-hour traffic and back to Centro Loyola we were a scruffy lot. After showering, we went to dinner at Doña Mercedes, a pleasant and spacious restaurant on the Boulevard los Héroes, and relived the experience of what had seemed like weeks but was in fact only two days. The trip had forged a camaraderie among the group—except, it appeared, for one member. The Archbishop seemed out of his element now; he sat off by himself at the corner of the bar, dressed far too warmly in a white-and-gray patterned sweater, and sipping a drink. This sudden distancing seemed to reflect something profound about Weakland's character. In the course of his personal and professional formation, he had been either intensely alone or intensely in community with a self-selected few. He had entered the monastic life as a boy of thirteen, and in his thirties he had begun his rise to positions of greater and greater authority, from which there had been no descent. He did not seem at ease here; where there was no agenda, no particular reason for all of us to be together. We were not his family, or his real friends; we were not the brother monks he knew so well. He seemed not so much lost in his own world as tentative about entering ours; I sensed that he didn't know exactly what to do or say, or how to act. Or was this perhaps the moody man he had spoken of back in Milwaukee—the man unsure of himself, feeling unequal to the task that lay ahead the next day?

During dinner, the conversation turned to the coming meetings with President Cristiani, Colonel Ponce, and Ambassador Walker, and the Archbishop seemed to come back to himself,



the next day's possibilities now enlivening him. "We have a limited amount of time," he announced. "We have to take control of it quickly, or else we'll just be lectured to. That's what the Pope does. When you pay him a visit, you'd better have an agenda. Jon Cortina must be protected. The government must help those people in the north—at least, stop persecuting them. The Army has to be scaled back if any lasting peace is to come and any money is to be made available to address the awful poverty. The investigation into the Jesuits' death—the government has to know that American sentiment is changing very quickly."

The next morning, en route to the meetings with the President and the Defense Minister, the Archbishop and his delegation ran a gantlet of armed guards, ranging from uniformed soldiers with automatic rifles at the front gate of the Presidential palace to a young man straddling the hood of a Chevrolet parked near the palace steps, who wore a glove of woven metal bristling with studs. It was a gantlet run for a small prize: we were met not by President Cristiani or Defense Minister Ponce but by Cristiani's chief of staff, Ernesto Altschul, who is frequently quoted as a spokesman for the Salvadoran government. Altschul, who wore a well-tailored tropical-weight suit and spoke in nearly unaccented English, apologized for the absence of the country's leaders, explaining that they were in "urgent meetings" because of the F.M.L.N. offensive. He quickly made the delegation aware of his credentials for this occasion: he had been educated by Jesuits at Loyola University in New Orleans, he had been married by Oscar Romero, and he had taken an eighty-per-cent pay cut in leaving private industry for government work. He listened with a serious but somewhat practiced air as Archbishop Weakland decried the deaths of innocent civilians in the north, Father Cortina's ambush, and the ongoing persecution of the Church. The government's assaults, the Archbishop suggested, might better be directed against poverty than against the poor.

Altschul parried this with a thrust of his own. "We have offered those people other places to live, and they refuse to go," he said. "Be careful, please, with such words as 'faith' and 'religious belief,' for what we often see is politics

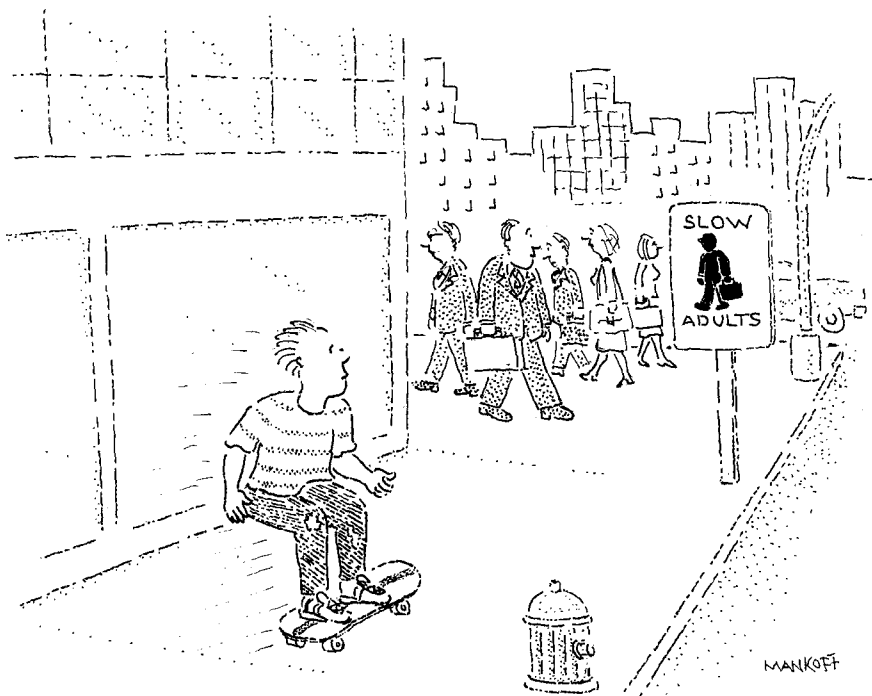
masquerading as religion, and, as we both know, the Holy Father, who is Pope to both of us, has been quite clear on this."

"I don't think he had in mind persecuting people for their beliefs," the Archbishop replied evenly.

Letting this pass, Altschul rose and went to the opposite end of the table, where a television set stood. As if he were a magician preparing to snatch away a veil and reveal a surprise, his voice became deep and dramatic. "Let me show you what does not help us," he intoned, "and, in fact, hinders us on the road to peace." He turned on the set with something of a flourish, and we watched a videotape of a caravan of Americans accompanying campesinos from the southern part of the country, who were returning with building materials to resettle their bombed-out villages. The delegation sat stony-faced, but Weakland had difficulty repressing a smile, for among the Americans were the faces of several Milwaukee Catholics.

That afternoon, at the American Embassy, Ambassador Walker echoed Altschul's call for patience. Walker joined the Foreign Service in 1961 and had since been posted to a series of Latin-American hot spots. Referring to President Cristiani as "Freddy"—as if the elected head of El Salvador were his faithful golden retriever—Walker told the delegation that neither the right wing of the Salvadoran power elite (men like the ARENA's Roberto D'Aubuisson, whom Walker described as a young Hitler) and its supporters in the military nor the left (at least, as represented by the F.M.L.N.) should be allowed free rein. Progress could be made only if the small but growing center could maintain its feeble grip on political power, he said, and he noted that "the network of organizations" supporting the F.M.L.N. was partly to blame for slowing down the peace process and extending the war. Within that suspect and shadowy network, of course, was the SHARE Foundation, the group under whose auspices we had come.

The meeting ended abruptly after the lights in the room began to blink at short intervals and a public-address system directed all Embassy employees to leave for home by four o'clock and to be off the streets by dark. Newspapers being hawked on the streets featured photographs of bloodied civilian



casualties, a map indicating the main combat areas, and headlines calling for the populace to back the government. As daylight faded, we heard again the sounds of low-flying helicopters. This time, we could see them, as they crisscrossed the city just above the tops of the tallest palm and eucalyptus trees.

We had hoped to hold our farewell dinner in another of the good and very reasonably priced restaurants in the capital, but because of the curfew the venue had to be Centro Loyola. Before dinner, Archbishop Weakland and Bishops Sullivan and Ramirez concelebrated the delegation's last Mass, in the center's chapel. At the front of the chapel, directly behind the altar, is a wall of floor-to-ceiling glass canted outward at the base and offering a panoramic view of the city. The Mass started at six; ten minutes later, the first explosion was heard. A second, a third, a fourth mortar resonated dully within the chapel as the Archbishop read the words of the Gospel—Luke's story of Zacchæus, who was so short that he had to climb a sycamore tree to see Christ passing by. An uneasy quiet fell as the Mass proceeded. Above the altar was a crucifix, and because of the way Christ's head was positioned He appeared to be looking down over San Salvador. Archbishop Weakland delivered a short homily, but I could recall no more of it than an allusion to the Church needing at times to climb the tree so that it, too, could get a better

look at Christ. The bleeding figure on the cross silently imparted its own message that night.

On the way to the airport the next morning, we stopped off in the San Miguelito neighborhood, in the northern part of the capital, to visit Bishop Medardo Gómez, of the Lutheran Church in El Salvador. He was not at his office, and the delegation was instructed to go to a secret location, a few blocks away. There, in a private home with its window shades on the street side drawn, Bishop Gómez, a short, stocky fireplug of a man with a complexion and features indicating his Indian blood, apologized for inconveniencing the delegation because of his "personal situation." He had received a death threat—the latest of many—a few days earlier. But he did not dwell on that. He spoke instead about his pastoral work, and about the white wooden cross, seven feet high, that stood in the Resurrection Lutheran Church. It had been branded a "subversive cross" by the military, because Lutheran parishioners had inscribed the country's sins upon it: there was "Greed," and "Poverty," as there might be in any country, but also "Torture," "Disappearances," "Bombings." The cross had been seized in a raid a year before, but had recently been returned to the church. "I finally understand why you Catholic clerics came up with the idea of celibacy," Gómez told his visitors. "I have six children. They

wake up with nightmares. My wife is constantly worried. I could go through all of this, if it were only myself I had to worry about. But I fear for them."

ON an American Airlines plane bound for Miami, Archbishop Weakland leaned his head back on the headrest of the seat after finishing his breviary. I was sitting beside him. I had kept myself from taking his emotional pulse at each juncture of the trip, feeling that, while he had always been open with me, doing so would have been intrusive. Now I could word my question no better than "What went on there for you?"

He smiled over at me. "For one thing, I found out that I'm not a hero," he said, his tone betraying a certain wistful disappointment. "And I can't play a hero. I'm not moving to the slums. I'm not going back to work in El Salvador. But I know that I was jolted out of my provincialism—a silly provincialism that turns the fleeting issues back home into major concerns. I stood beside people who are on a blacklist—Rivera y Damas, Cortina, Gómez—and this is a blacklist that means they could be killed any day. My being on the Vatican's blacklist—what is that? It means even less than it did before. What risk do I really face? What could really be done to me?"

"Martyrdom. That was a big part of this trip. I learned what martyrs are. I've been to all the sites in Rome; I've prayed at the tombs, knelt at the shrines; I've walked through the catacombs, the Circus Maximus, the Colosseum. But it never really touched me until I stood in Oscar Romero's room, at the altar where he was shot, at his tomb. The Jesuits' rooms—so simple, so ordinary. The place where they died—there are no candles dripping, no great shrine, just rosebushes. The graves of the Maryknoll sisters are no different from those of thousands of Salvadorans around them. I could never identify with our classic Catholic martyrs, but here I saw that martyrdom is not something you seek. A martyr, to me, is someone who just did his best and, because of circumstances, was killed. I'm sure the Salvadoran martyrs never thought of themselves as doing something special, something brave. No, they were working in the ordinariness of each day, looking at the events around them, reacting, trying to do—in some small, usually unnoticeable

way—something they thought was right. When the moment of martyrdom came for the Jesuits, they were sleeping in their beds. Romero was saying Mass. The religious women were coming back from the airport. Doing ordinary things. I needed to realize the ordinariness of most of their lives, because, after all, that is what much of life is. What set these people apart is that they stood for a kind of religion—a religious belief—that influences lives. Religion, for them, was not a case of obeying rules but of influencing lives—and that is a very threatening thing to those who want to keep order. But if religion doesn't influence lives why bother with it?"

"Only one Church will survive in Central America. Will it be the Church of Rivera y Damas and Romero, or will it be the Church of Cardinal Obando y Bravo? In the States, our Church doesn't face that kind of struggle for survival. Our struggle is more subtle, and therefore more insidious. We face being ignored. In a strange way, the trip was like a retreat for me—a time to get things into perspective, which is what my best retreats have given me. When you go to a place in which it is so difficult to hang on to one's faith and yet faith is so alive, what can you do but go back home and do whatever you can? Again, I am not a hero. I was afraid."

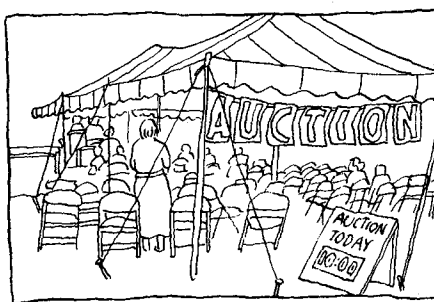
Weakland returned to Milwaukee on Thanksgiving, and the next morning he held a press conference. He had drafted a statement summarizing the group's activities in El Salvador, including the meeting with the F.M.L.N. But the Milwaukee press corps, which had been denied access to him for almost two weeks, was more interested in the details surrounding the denial of the Fribourg degree—an issue that had receded in the Archbishop's mind. In Washington, he had said that if he were a Catholic college president he would be a bit leery about speaking out. But now there was a different tone: he

could not imagine keeping silent, he said, "unless you take out my tongue." The line made the national Associated Press wire, and the local papers gave it front-page play.

That Sunday, in his homily at the eight-o'clock Mass, the Archbishop discussed the three traits of a committed Christian. "Jesus promised those who followed his leadership only three things," he said. "They would be absurdly happy, entirely fearless, and always in trouble." He paused, as if to consider what he had just said. "Absurdly happy," he went on. "I am that. Entirely fearless—oh, boy, I have to work on that one a lot. Always in trouble." At this, the congregants burst into applause.

Boxes of letters, the vast majority voicing support over the Fribourg incident, had awaited the Archbishop in his office. A few more letters arrived early in the week, and after that the Archbishop thought the Fribourg matter was over with. But there was one more communication to come. At the end of the week, Weakland received a letter from the Vatican. Archbishop Pio Laghi, the head of the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education, wrote to say that the reason Weakland's name had not been cleared for the degree was that another congregation—Cardinal Ratzinger's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—had not had sufficient time to evaluate the Archbishop's articles in the *Catholic Herald* on the "listening sessions" that the Archbishop had held on abortion. Weakland had in fact voluntarily sent the two articles to Rome—as he customarily does whenever something he has said or written might prompt letters to the Vatican—some months before, but he had received neither acknowledgment nor response. Archbishop Laghi's letter concluded, "I deeply regret the pain that you have suffered, I share it with you, and I sincerely assure you of my prayers so that the wound so inadvertently caused will be healed."

That the Vatican should offer an explanation of its actions was a rarity in itself; an apology was even rarer. But this was a private apology for what had mushroomed into a public deed. In his response, Weakland thanked Laghi for his "kind and gracious letter," but added, "Since most of the newspapers had been asking me if I had heard from you, I thought it might be wise to release your response. Not



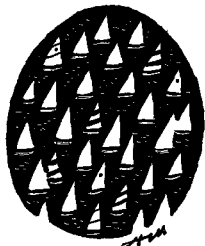
only does it clarify the situation but, I believe, also places the Vatican and yourself in a good light." When the story broke nationally and Laghi was asked by a reporter for the Religious News Service if indeed his letter was an apology, he shouted over the phone that it was simply "a clarification."

Whatever it may have been, Fribourg was over for the Archbishop. There were far more immediate and important matters on which he would have to deal with Vatican officials. One of his auxiliary bishops, Leo Brust, was reaching the mandatory retirement age of seventy-five, and the Archbishop wanted to make sure that his replacement was a man he could work with, and not the traditionalist he knew that the Vatican wanted as a countervailing force in Milwaukee. After two letters to the United States pro-nuncio, Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan—the first was not answered to his satisfaction—Weakland elicited a guarantee that he would have veto power over the appointment. His second letter had been remarkably frank, informing the nuncio that the appointment of Robert Banks to Green Bay had not sat well, and that he and other American bishops felt "that it is totally useless to present names, and find it offensive that one is expected to go through a procedure that is a charade." He noted that many of his colleagues at the N.C.C.B. meeting "had hoped that the appointments of bishops would not continue to be controlled by Cardinal Law, Cardinal O'Connor, and Cardinal Krol; but it looks as if former procedures will still hold true."

The planned pastoral letter on the state of the priesthood in the archdiocese fell into place quickly after the El Salvador trip. The first twenty-two pages of the twenty-five-page document could have been written by almost any bishop in America: there was a shortage of priests, which would only get worse; priests were needed to preside over the sacraments; priests were overloaded; a growing number of parishes already had to do without pastors. But on page 23 the Archbishop broke new ground. If a congregation was without a resident priest and had no prospect of getting one in the near future, he wrote, "I would be willing to help the community surface a qualified candidate for ordained priesthood—even if a married man—

and, without raising false expectations or unfounded hopes for him or the community, present such a candidate to the Pastor of the Universal Church for light and guidance."

This was scarcely a gentle lob into the Vatican's court. Weakland was saying that the Eucharist, not celibacy, was at the heart of the Church, and that he was ready to ordain a married man to the priesthood. Such an act was clearly in opposition to centuries of Church teaching and practice, and again Weakland was in newspapers across the country.



With the document finished and distributed to Milwaukee priests for their comments, Weakland went back to the business of being the leader of his archdiocese. The Little Eucharistic Lamb had taken to appearing in bright-red clothing at the eight-o'clock Mass at St. John's. After a psychologist whom the chancery consulted reported that this might presage an unpredictable mood swing, Weakland doubled the plainclothes guard around her at the Mass. On a more personal note, realizing that he would spend the rest of his ecclesiastical life in Milwaukee, the Archbishop decided that he wanted more privacy than his apartment in St. John's rectory afforded. He gave approval for the renovation of an old brick building on the grounds of the archdiocesan seminary; he moved in this spring.

And Briana Ziolkowski, from St. Philip Neri elementary school, came to dinner. She and two other winners of the Archbishop's art contest and their parents all sat down in the rectory dining room to a sumptuous meal of Sloppy Joes encased in flaky French pastry and a dessert of fudge brownies à la mode. Briana wore a black-and-white striped dress and glistening patent-leather shoes. The Archbishop wore a plaid Pendleton over his clerical shirt, and soon unbuttoned his top button and pushed the Roman collar to the side. After the meal, he took his guests up to his suite of rooms and played the piano for an hour: Debussy, Chopin, Rachmaninoff. Often he will pander to popular taste and entertain with a little Scott Joplin, but that evening the Archbishop had decided to keep the concert "at a high level, befitting my guests."

—PAUL WILKES

(This is the second part of
a two-part article.)

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MUSICAL EVENTS

Return of the Bolshoi

THE Bolshoi Opera visited New York in 1975, bringing to the Metropolitan Opera House substantial, traditional productions of Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov," Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" and "Queen of Spades," and Prokofiev's "War and Peace"; a production of Prokofiev's "The Gambler" that had been provided by its director, Boris Pokrovsky, with a "moral message"; and a contemporary opera, Kiril Molchanov's "The Dawns Are Quiet Here." Last month, the company returned to the Met, bringing three ambitious, untraditional, uneasy productions: of Tchaikovsky's "Eugene Onegin" and "The Maid of Orleans" and Rimsky-Korsakov's "Mlada." All three were the work of artists who had been admired in 1975: Alexander Lazarev (now the artistic and musical director of the company), Mr. Pokrovsky (the stage director), and Valery Levental (the designer).

"MLADA" received its American premiere. The opera had an unusual inception. Early in 1872, S. A. Gedeonov, an archeologist who directed both the Petersburg Imperial Theatres and the Hermitage, invited four of the "Mighty Handful" of nationalist composers to collaborate in creating the score for a spectacular historical pageant of his devising—a farrago of folklore, ancient rite, infernal revelry, and ethnic episode set in a ninth-century Baltic city. The ballet music would be written by Minkus. Act I was assigned to Cui, Acts II and III to Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov (who were sharing quarters at the time), and Act IV to Borodin. They went to work, and a piano run-through took place. But the work was abandoned, and the composers put most of the music they had written to other uses.

Minkus's ballet "Mlada" appeared in 1879. In 1889, Rimsky-Korsakov, after rehearsing Borodin's act at an informal memorial gathering, decided to orchestrate it, and also to set the whole libretto himself. He had undertaken no opera since "Snow Maiden," nearly ten years before. Hearing the "Ring" rekindled his interest in the genre. The opera was soon written. "The Wagnerian system of leitmotifs had considerably accelerated composing," he said in his memoirs, and "notable absence of contrapuntal writing also helped to speed the work." But since "my orchestral intentions were novel and ambitious à la Wagner," the scoring occupied a further year. "Mlada" reached the Maryinsky stage in 1892.

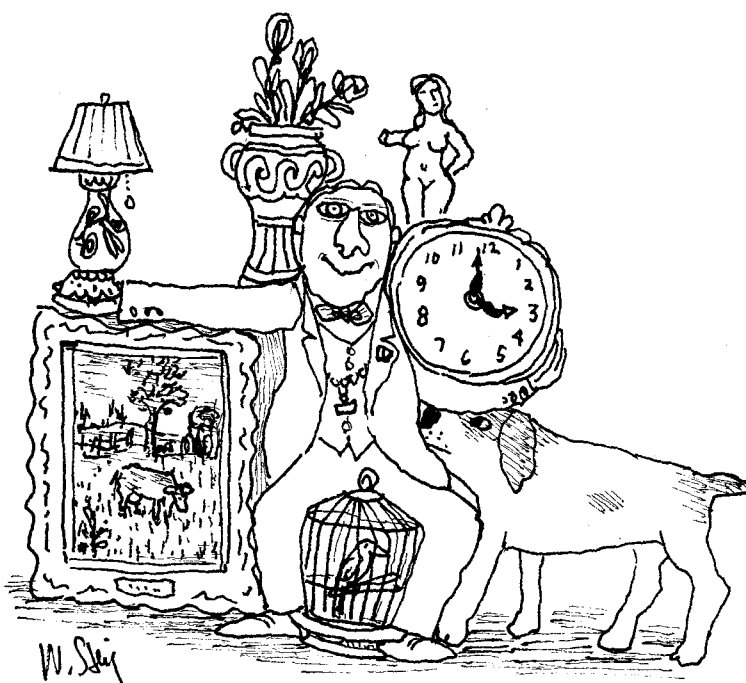
It has seldom been revived. It is not an opera to place beside "Christmas Eve," "May Night," or "The Czar's Bride"—let alone the poignant "Snow Maiden," the exciting "Sadko" and "Czar Saltan," the stirring and beautiful "Kitezh." The scenario is a series of tableaux, and the composer found himself unable to develop what he called the "laconic shortness" of the libretto. He treated the episodes fully and brilliantly, employing a very large orchestra, a very large chorus, and

many soloists. And, as Gerald Abraham says in his study of the opera, "these episodes are handled so well, provided with music as colorful as almost any he ever wrote, that one is almost induced to overlook the pointlessness of it all." The score is influenced by Wagner (as the opera ends, a temple collapses, a lake overflows its banks, engulfing all, and then recedes, a rainbow breaks forth, and gods are seen in the sky), by Liszt, and by Balakirev. Rimsky-Korsakov's own, fascinating sense of colors—as much melodic as instrumental—dominates all. In the Cleopatra scene, shrill fifes, high clarinets, and glissando panpipes (in the Bolshoi production they were played onstage) make a fiercely exotic sound. The motifs and sonorities of the infernal scene point directly toward those of Stravinsky's "Firebird." The Met had heard no Rimsky-Korsakov opera except "The Golden Cockerel" for nearly sixty years. "Mlada" was welcome.

The production appeared at the Bolshoi in 1988. It visited Glasgow last year, and in a program note there the director wrote:

"Mlada" has only been staged three times [Loewenberg's annals note a Moscow production in 1913 and a Leningrad revival in 1923] and each time has been regarded as unsuccessful. Without delving into the many reasons for this, it suffices to say that the opera is of the highest complexity and a successful staging must address these complexities and channel them into a positive, dynamic yet harmonized force. . . . Rimsky-Korsakov posed a theatrical riddle with his new work. Thus one should not expect its meanings to be explicit. . . . In the oppositions of Matter and Spirit; Life and Dream; Selfishness and Sacrifice; Evil and Love, the characters in "Mlada" are all distilled: they are leitmotifs of deceit, malice, love and lust for power. These leitmotifs then become the basis of the search for a theatrical solution to the riddle.

In New York, what the narrative content might be was largely concealed from anyone without Russian. No libretto was on sale. In a curt program synopsis, just "The Festivities are in full swing" covered the cosmo-



Possessions are part of the self.

politan market scene (which has ten subsidiary soloists, including a Moorish venter, a Viking guest, a couple from Novgorod), the bard Lumir's moving song (who could guess that he leads a band of Czech refugees come to implore Russian aid against the German invasion?), the well-known Procession of the Nobles (treated neither as a procession nor nobly), the mysterious and beautiful clip-clop of a Divination by Sacred Horses white and black, the Lithuanian and the Hindu dances. The principal characters were replicated by full-size dolls, rag dolls tossed to and fro (the members of the cast were good catchers), dancers, children. Almost everyone was dressed in white. Identification was often difficult. The execution was energetic, with a good deal of arms-flying Bolshoi choreography, but the lighting was generally murky. The shade of Mlada—who has been killed before the opera begins—was sinuously portrayed by the dancer Nina Ananiashvili. The wicked Voislava, who killed her, was played with great bounce and jollity by Makvala Kasrashvili. (She was also the Joan of Tchaikovsky's opera.) A lively, imperfect performer, she is rather winning, even though her high notes are ugly. Elena Zarembo, the Lumir, is a smooth, rich mezzo whom one would like to hear again. She was allowed only the final strophe of the song; two tots sang the others. Alexei Stepanov conducted two performances, and then Mr. Lazarev took over.

I WROTE about "The Maid of Orleans," an uneven and unwieldy opera, when Eve Queler presented it last year in Carnegie Hall. Tchaikovsky's biographer David Brown writes fairly of "step-by-step setting of a libretto," "melodic parsimony," and a "flow of musical prose." Tchaikovsky hoped that he was composing a grand opera with some chance of international success. Mr. Pokrovsky had determined that the work—again, I quote the Glasgow program note—"is rather an oratorio with solo arias, unfolding ensembles, finales, marches and hymns," in which "the chorus is the interpreter, informer and accompanist." The men of his chorus wore evening dress, with red capes. The women were in red or white; when they represented Joan's voices

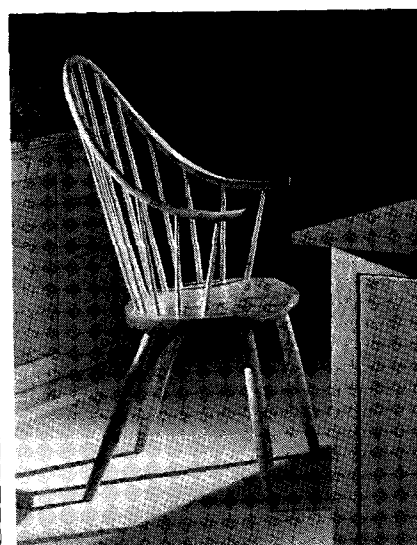
(which were intended by Tchaikovsky for an invisible choir) they donned long angel wings, and a further band of angels, cutouts, descended from the flies. The chorus occupied the sides and back of a unit set, ranged oratorio fashion, while center stage the drama was unrealistically enacted. Joan brandished an eight-foot sword. A posse of maidens in white shifts (were they memories of her youth? Domrémy shepherdesses? guardian angels?) hastened in to attend her at crises. At the close, she stood on a giant hot plate that was hauled up to the flies while red-lit steam poured from below. Mr. Lazarev's conducting was coarse.

TCHAIKOVSKY entrusted the first performance of "Eugene Onegin" to students of the Moscow Conservatory. To Mme. von Meck he had written:

Where shall I find the Tatyana whom Pushkin imagined and whom I have tried to picture in music? Where is the artist who can even approach the ideal Onegin, that cold dandy penetrated to the marrow with worldly *bon ton*? Where is there a Lensky, an eighteen-year-old youth with the thick curls and the impetuous and original ways of a young poet à la Schiller? How Pushkin's charming and original picture will be vulgarized when it is transferred to the stage, with its routine, its senseless traditions, its veterans of both sexes who . . . shamelessly take on the roles of sixteen-year-old girls and beardless youths!

A St. Louis production this season, performed by fairly young singers, was lovingly, sensitively, and straightforwardly staged by Colin Graham. Gwynne Geyer and Dwayne Croft, the Tatyana and the Onegin, sang accurately, without strain but with some lack of ardor in phrasing and utterance; Paul Groves' Lensky was movingly impetuous. David Lloyd-Jones' English translation was used. Rhymes for "Onegin" prove elusive; those that we heard were oft obtrusive. (At the climax of the letter scene, Tatyana sang, "Are you an angel sent to guard me? Or will you tempt and then discard me?") There are many English translations of the opera; perhaps we need a new one in which their various felicities are combined.

The Bolshoi "Onegin"—a new production, which in New York received its first performance—was far from traditional. In "Mlada" and the "Maid"—two "problem" operas—one could discern what Mr. Pokrovsky had



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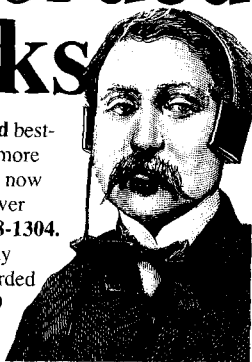
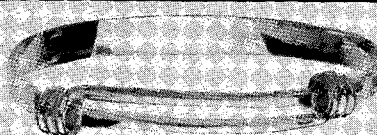
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in mind, even while not wholly admiring the results. His new "Onegin" was a puzzler. Perhaps, after nearly fifty years with the company, he simply wanted to experiment. During the previous Bolshoi visit, he offered a large, uneccentric, sensitive, Stanislavsky-influenced staging of the opera, dating from 1944—one to which individual performers could, within the conventional frame, add their personal touches and insights. (In 1975, the first-night Tatyana, Onegin, and Lensky were Tamara Milashkina, Yuri Mazurok, and Vladimir Atlantov; later, the young Kasrashvili was a touching heroine.) In Mr. Pokrovsky's new version, the first four scenes—the garden ("on the right, a shady tree, with a flower bed nearby"), Tatyana's bedroom, another part of the garden (with "thick lilac and acacia bushes, untidy flower beds, and an old bench"), the ballroom—are played all in the same, indoor two-story set: a large opened-up doll's house, placed far upstage, and so designed that to many of the spectators some of the action was invisible. It had five rooms and a gallery. Tatyana began the letter scene in a distant upper-right corner of the stage; then she picked up her candle and wandered, Lady Macbeth-like, through the house. The quintet of the second-act finale was sung with each character in a different room—a quaint effect, unhelpful to the drama and to musical ensemble. In the final scene, when Tatyana sang her poignant "Happiness was once so near us," an aged retainer—he could have been Firs from "The Cherry Orchard"—broke in on the intimate duet and, with heavy, obvious symbolism, dropped high, heavy curtains over what light remained.

There were some striking musical effects achieved by quietness: this was often the softest "Onegin" that I have ever heard. Nina Rautio, a young Tatyana, breathed many phrases on a thread of tone so well controlled that it carried easily through the house, and that was beautiful. When she opened up, she was less pleasing. Fuat Mansurov (who also conducted the opera in 1975) kept the orchestra to a matching whisper; from a seat near the back of the enormous house I had to strain to hear what was happening, could only just catch the bass line. No complaint: being made to listen hard is more rewarding than being

blasted. The first horn, the first oboe, and the first cello were good players—participants in the musical drama, soloists with character in their phrasing and their timbres. The sudden blare of the full orchestra—beery brasses, ill-tuned woodwinds—when Mr. Mansurov too abruptly let it rip was distressing. The Onegin, Vladimir Redkin—he was also the Lionel of the "Maid"—is a tall, handsome young baritone with a strong, handsome voice but his phrasing was unpoetic. The Lensky, Oleg Kulko—he was also the tenor of "Mlada" and the "Maid"—has a strong, full top, but he was a dull, wooden interpreter and no kind of actor (and his intonation was sometimes suspect). In 1975, Evgeny Nesterenko sang Gremin's aria intimately, confidently, to Onegin, in the way that Stanislavsky suggested; this time he delivered it as a public address to the audience.

RUSSIA's Imperial singers set, and the best Soviet singers maintained, standards of legato—note joined to note in an unhurried but energetic flow of tone, piquantly paced and colored by the words—that made them in their own repertory supreme. Their prowess is copiously documented on records. To chide singers for in live performances falling short of what their greatest predecessors set down on disk would be absurd. But one can fairly regret that few of the Bolshoi singers even aimed at that particular eloquence. Most of them sang sturdily, but as if they had not studied and aspired to the smoothness, the evenness, the colors, the subtle art of their Imperial predecessors. The Bolshoi, one learns, is, like many grand-opera companies today, in straits: strapped for money, critically assailed. It is no longer the amply funded national troupe that so confidently visited us sixteen years ago. Many of the best Russian singers and conductors now make their money in the West. One is sympathetic, but it was hard not to feel that the company, at least in these productions, has tended to sacrifice to trendiness the traditional qualities it might maintain. Not "Mlada" nor the "Maid" nor "Onegin," for all the incidental, considerable pleasures that each offered, was a satisfying Russian account of the opera concerned.

—ANDREW PORTER

AROUND CITY HALL

Déjà Vu

At a press conference toward the end of a meeting, held here on July 2nd, of the state Financial Control Board, which monitors the fiscal affairs of New York City, Mario Cuomo, the board's chairman, reflected aloud on the decisions about priorities which face those in charge of running governments. "How can you hold a big parade just because we won a war and how can you *not* hold a parade—with everyone dressed in black—for all the people who die in the streets?" This question, put by New York's Democratic governor, could usefully serve as a prime example of what is wrong with the nation's Democrats in the view of some Republicans—particularly, chances are, some of the more than four thousand who a few weeks ago attended an event called the President's Dinner, at the Washington Convention Center, which raised more than seven million dollars for G.O.P. candidates around the country. The question may already have been stowed away in Republican files in case Cuomo, who keeps saying, ritually, that he has no plans to run for President and no plans to make plans, decides to go for it. Speaking of the Democrats, George Bush told the crowd at the Convention Center, "They're *desperate*. They seem to feed these Democratic leaders on hard feelings. They thrive on bad times. They keep telling us that everything is *bad* about our country. Such a negative approach for this—the greatest country on earth!"

It would probably confirm some out-of-town Republicans' darkest suspicions about New York's not being a truly all-American place to learn that the city does not hold an annual Fourth of July parade. The non-celebration is especially surprising in a city where parades are a way of life from St. Patrick's Day until the Italian-Americans' big Columbus Day march. During all that time, major parades—usually up Fifth Avenue—commemorating ethnic and other causes, are held at the rate of one or more each weekend, and participation by politicians, including the mayor, is considered pretty much obligatory. Possibly a Fourth of July parade is given a bye here because June is already so full of

such celebrations, including the Salute to Israel parade, the Puerto Rican Day parade, and, this June, the Welcome Home parade for the troops who served in the Persian Gulf, at all of which Mayor David Dinkins was prominently in attendance. Parades give New Yorkers an opportunity to see their mayor close up, more or less, and also a chance to let him know what is on their minds, which sometimes turns out not to bring political comfort. At the Puerto Rican Day parade last month, Dinkins was booed, out of anger over his so-called doomsday budget, which would force the city to lay off many thousands of workers; as the spectators then guessed, most of the layoffs have been among the lowest-paid employees, the majority of whom are blacks and Latinos, and who now often speak mournfully—stridently—of the irony that without their support Dinkins could not have won the 1989 mayoral race.

The Mayor did not attend the Gay Rights parade, on June 30th, that being the day the city's budget for the 1992 fiscal year was supposed to be passed into law by midnight. All through the turbulent final negotiations, however, when City Hall was under siege—from lobbyists for one program or another, from ordinary New Yorkers

who kept saying that they had counted on the city's new mayor to help them achieve their hopes and dreams, from people crying that the doomsday budget meant death for old people and for children—Dinkins was able, to a remarkable degree, to keep up with his usual crowded ceremonial and recreational routine. There were a few awkward moments, some of which he handled well. When a group of people were demonstrating on City Hall's steps to protest cuts in programs for the New York Foundling Hospital, the Mayor simply reached out for one of their buttons, which read "Save the Family, Save the Children," stuck it in his lapel, and urged them to vent their frustration on those who were really to blame—the City Council, the State Legislature, and Mario Cuomo. However, when James Butler, the head of a union of health-care workers, who had been one of the most stalwart of Dinkins' campaign workers in 1989, arrived with a large band of fellow union members, some of them carrying a coffin, over which they held a funeral to mark the death of health services in the city on account of projected budget cuts, the union leader was outraged to discover that the Mayor was not there to greet him but was up at Gracie Mansion, presiding over a barbecue for people who had been helpful in putting on the Welcome Home parade. Following orders, police kept Butler and his colleagues



"But, Dad, in your day sex was still in the future."

away from City Hall, behind police lines. Andrew Stein, the president of the City Council, who has said he might well run for mayor against Dinkins in 1993, invited the funeral holders up the steps of City Hall, whereupon Butler began shouting, "Andrew Stein for Mayor!"

Even if New York had held a Fourth of July parade, Dinkins might have skipped it. On the afternoon of July 3rd, he took off to the Berkshires, for four days at Bill Cosby's place, where he had also spent the Memorial Day weekend. But it probably wouldn't have mattered if the Mayor had marched in a Fourth of July parade, since in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Marshfield, Missouri, George Bush did enough marching for all chief executives. In Grand Rapids, he praised the "good, old-fashioned kind of patriotism," and said that the Gulf War had helped the nation "rediscover the important things about ourselves and our country." In Marshfield (pop. 4,273), the governor of Missouri hailed the President as someone who had led the country "to kinder times where families stick together . . . where Americans aren't afraid to wave the flag." Everywhere Bush went, he praised small-town America and "the kind of values that carried the country for over two hundred years." In the parades, John Sununu, Bush's chief of staff, walked with the President; it was noted by a few irreverent spectators that this time he didn't require a limousine or a chartered airplane to get where he wanted to go. The message of Bush's holiday excursion was surely discouraging to any urban politician who has cherished the hope that the Administration might in the future be more sympathetic—and more generous—to large cities, such as New York, where life is very different, and needs are great. Dinkins points out daily—sometimes several times a day—that in 1980 the federal government provided 19.4 per cent of the city's budget, whereas it now accounts for only 9.7 per cent, and he adds, in aggrieved tones, that if Washington had followed the old pattern the city would have no fiscal problems at all. At the Financial Control Board meeting this month, Governor Cuomo, without mentioning Dinkins, urged New Yorkers to stop wasting time on this kind of mindless speculation over what might somehow come their way

out of Washington, saying, "We've got to stop this waiting for Godot"—unless, of course, Godot should turn out to be a Democrat.

HARDLY anybody would quarrel with the judgment that Winston Churchill has been replaced by Yogi Berra as politicians' favorite source of quotations. On many days during this city's tumultuous budget season, which concluded with the passage of a twenty-eight-and-a-half-billion-dollar budget, you could rarely make it through City Hall's corridors without hearing, "Well, it ain't over till. . . ." Yogi's comment "It's déjà vu all over again" was particularly in style among those who were able from personal recollection to compare the city's perilous financial circumstances now with the even more frightening time, sixteen years ago, when New York nearly went bankrupt. In September, 1975, the city's finances were taken over by the Financial Control Board, and the city existed for several years in a kind of receivership. Eventually, the city's circumstances improved, and the state shifted the F.C.B. into an advisory mode, in which it was responsible only for monitoring the city's finances. At the F.C.B.'s July 2nd meeting, the discussion included not only the city's new budget but also the question of whether the F.C.B. should resume an active role in the city's financial life. The meeting was held in the conference room next to Governor Cuomo's office on the fifty-seventh floor of the World Trade Center. The board consists of the governor of the state, the mayor of this city, the state and city comptrollers, and three representatives of the private sector, from the financial and corporate world, who are appointed by the governor. With one exception, however, this meeting was not a case of déjà vu for the present cast of characters. All three private-sector members are relatively recent appointees. In 1975, State Comptroller Edward Regan was the county executive of upstate Erie County. City Comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman was a Brooklyn member of Congress. Mayor Dinkins was the city clerk, an official whose primary responsibility is performing marriages. Only Cuomo occasionally attended meetings of the Control Board of sixteen years ago, as secretary of state for Governor Hugh Carey. Nonetheless,

Dinkins knows enough about the operations of the F.C.B. in the seventies to be convinced that if its former powers over the city should be restored New Yorkers would be, in his words, "deprived of their destiny as a free people."

Among the circumstances that, by law, would trigger the revival of the Control Board's powers was the requirement that there be a budget gap of no more than a hundred million dollars, and that the state and city comptrollers, and the F.C.B. itself, be willing to certify this. The Mayor seemed to believe that he was in good shape on that one. At ten-thirty on the night of June 30th, an hour and a half before the deadline, the Mayor, his five deputy mayors, and other staff members, and the Speaker of the City Council, most of the thirty-five Council members, and their budget advisers gathered for a press conference in City Hall's Blue Room. The Mayor announced that he was proud to say that the city's budget was "in balance" and "on time." It called for more than a billion and a half dollars' worth of cuts in services, and up to ten thousand layoffs of city employees. ("10,000 GOODBYES" had been the *Newsday* headline a few days earlier.) Numerous taxes and fees would be raised, and various other adjustments allowed the Mayor to lay claim to a budget in balance, among them the fortunate circumstance that under the new city charter he has the sole power to estimate city revenues for budget purposes. At the last minute, when, by some estimates, the revenues seemed to be falling short, his staff was providentially able to assure him that it had discovered "a bit of an upturn."

The night was steamy, as the weather had been during most of the weekend while laborers over the budget worked long and late, in some cases through the night; many of those who lined up at the front of the Blue Room for the big announcement wore shorts or jeans. The Mayor, announcing the agreement, was, as usual, dressed in a bandbox-fresh, wrinkle-free suit, which conveyed the impression—not entirely inaccurate—that he had been largely detached from the budgetary heavy lifting. This year, also thanks to the charter, the City Council has new powers, one of which is the sole authority to vote on the budget. In the last weeks of the budget negotiations, relations between the Mayor's office



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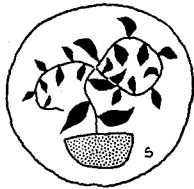
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and—on the other side of City Hall—the office of City Council Speaker Peter Vallone had at times resembled guerrilla warfare. On the night of the budget announcement, however, genial smiles were the order. In fact, although the two ends of City Hall had reached a degree of comity, their agreement amounted to not much more than declaring a glorious victory in time to be able to put the critical June 30th date on the budget announcement. The revenues referred to were still not in place, the State Legislature having not yet agreed to them. The Mayor's people and Vallone's people were still rejiggering the figures, adding this item, taking away that, for the next thirty or so hours. It wasn't until 7:30 A.M. on July 2nd, three and a half hours before the scheduled F.C.B. meeting, that the Council actually passed the budget. The vote was 33-2, and was unaccompanied by the meandering and often rancorous exchanges on the floor which Council watchers are inured to. The absence of debate was hardly surprising, since Brooklyn Councilman Herbert Berman, the chairman of the Council's finance committee, had announced, "I have permission to commit violent acts on anyone who makes a speech and delays this."



A RECURRING term in city budget discussions was "structural balance"—followed by dissertations on the urgent need thereof. Despite steady warnings by the city's financial mentors, including the municipal-bond-rating agencies, it was not until May that the Dinkins administration acknowledged that it faced a gap between expenses and revenues of three and a half billion dollars in the coming fiscal year. The call for structural balance—that is, for the restructuring, or downsizing, of government, to accommodate shrinking revenues—was heard so frequently during this month's F.C.B. meeting that it began to sound like an incantation.

The first item on the F.C.B. agenda was a sign of how relatively dormant it has been: adoption of the minutes of its last meeting, which had taken place on July 19, 1990. A sign of the intense interest in the F.C.B.'s possible role in the city's current financial predicament was the large number of reporters and fiscal experts who crowded into the

Governor's conference room—so large that, near the meeting's start, Cuomo remarked that a certain structural balance (you might say downsizing) had already been achieved: two of New York's leading financial gurus, Donald Kummerfeld and Roger Altman, were sitting on the floor. The Mayor then praised the budget just passed—"on time and in balance," he said once again—and mentioned what he called the city's "enviable financial record." From there on, it was downhill all the way for Dinkins; the adjective used to

describe him in most news stories on the meeting was "bristling." State Comptroller Regan, who, although he is the only Republican holding statewide office, has in the past been on such excel-

lent terms with Cuomo that his fellow-Republicans have taken him to task for it, said that at least a hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of the Mayor's revenue estimates were "doubtful" and some three hundred million dollars' worth of his estimates of prospective city expenses were too low. The city's management of its finances, he said, was "not adequate or responsible" and could "not be tolerated" in the future. City Comptroller Holtzman described the budget as being on time, "more or less," but generally agreed with Regan that it was about four hundred and fifty million dollars out of balance, and "unrealistic."

The next item on the F.C.B. agenda was "Review of Conditions Relating to Continuation of Sunset," a title that an antic-minded poet might be able to make something of. Cuomo, who has often said that campaigning is poetry, while governing is prose, noted that the Control Board was at present in a condition called "sunset" and that the act of bringing it back into control over the city's finances would be called "sunrise." The two comptrollers and Allen Proctor, the F.C.B.'s executive director, declared, one after another, that they could not certify that the city budget was in compliance with all the provisions that would keep the F.C.B. from going into a sunrise mode. It was agreed that the city's circumstances were uncertain enough so that the board should meet again within the month and, thereafter, far more often than in the recent past. Cuomo then announced the formation of a task force that would study how to bring the

city into structural balance—determining, for example, whether the city was funding more agencies than it could afford—and would make recommendations for change. Although Dinkins referred to it as a "city-state" commission, Cuomo designated as its chairman his own budget director. Regan, talking to reporters later, raised the question of whether anything would come of the exercise, doubting, as he said he did, that either Dinkins or Cuomo had "the political will" to deal with the public-employee unions as forcefully as he felt was necessary. When Cuomo was told about this, he said of Regan, "He has a lot of fun with those little one-liners. He has trouble with paragraphs, though." Back at City Hall, Dinkins was very testy. He could not understand why a task force should study the city's progress toward structural balance "when we have made the most extensive progress toward structural balance in the history of the city." It became evident that the restructuring he had in mind was simply the redirecting of state and federal money that he felt was rightly the city's due.

MEANWHILE, New Yorkers are bracing themselves for the effect on their daily lives of the more severe cuts—known informally as the horrors—in the new budget. Local papers carry reminders that, for example, the ten thousand street-corner litter baskets will no longer be emptied on Sundays, at the end of long, hot, litter-generating weekends. The sixty-five thousand annual visits by exterminators from the Bureau of Pest Control (which, by the Bureau's estimate, have been doing in up to thirty rats a trip) will be reduced to twenty-five thousand, so next year over a million more rats may be extant to rove the city. (A *Newsday* story was illustrated with a quarter-page picture of an obviously ravenous rat.) And many thousands of the housebound elderly will wait in vain for the meals that city funds used to make it possible for private agencies to deliver to them daily.

In the case of the senior citizens, some help was at hand. A week after the City Council finally passed the budget, Leona Helmsley held a party for some of the disadvantaged elderly in the lobby of the Empire State Building, of which the Helmsley corporation is a principal owner. She announced that the corporation was con-

tributing two hundred thousand dollars, to be divided between the Alzheimer's Alert Program and Citymeals-on-Wheels, one of the agencies that deliver meals to the elderly. Mrs. Helmsley, whom the *News* described as "awash in jewelry," then danced with her husband as a senior citizens' band played "I'm Just Wild About Harry." Naturally, some cynics speculated that she might have hopes that news of her generosity would reach the judges of the federal appeals court to whom she has appealed her 1989 conviction (it resulted in a four-year prison sentence) for tax evasion. During most of the winter and spring, and through the Welcome Home parade, the lights at the top of the Empire State Building were pale yellow, in honor of the troops who fought in the Gulf. The lights turned lavender for the Gay Rights parade and, of course, red, white, and blue for the Fourth. Mrs. Helmsley announced at the party that for the rest of the summer the lights would be gray and silver, in honor of the elderly.

During a mid-June meeting in San Diego of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Dinkins was one of seven mayors who were given awards for their above-and-beyond-the-call-of-duty helpfulness to the elderly. On the morning of the Helmsley party, the *Post* reported that Bobbie Sackman, the coordinator of membership services for the Council of Senior Centers and Services—a group of two hundred and thirty private agencies that receive city funds to help the elderly—had said that Dinkins should return the award. Two days after he got back from San Diego, his budget advisers had cut 18.7 per cent from the budget of the Department for the Aging, or twenty per cent of its annual allotment.

The White House isn't the only seat of government where some sticky questions have been raised about transportation perks. The large number of chauffeur-driven cars assigned to members of the Dinkins administration and to other city officials and the large amounts of overtime the drivers earn have often been mentioned in discussions of the city's budget problems. A *Post* cartoon after the budget was passed showed a driver leaning on a large city car in front of City Hall and reading a paper with the headline "CITY LAYOFFS" as his passenger says to him, "James, don't worry about

being laid off. I've designated you as an essential service." Dinkins' week-end sojourn in San Diego in the midst of the budget crisis raised eyebrows at the time. More eyebrows were raised when it was learned what had happened after his limousine got stuck in traffic on the way to the airport that Friday afternoon. He called for one of the city's police helicopters, which are kept at the ready in case of police emergencies and cost several thousand dollars an hour to fly. Within minutes, the Mayor, carrying two tennis racquets, was soaring over the highway gridlock in time to make his five-thirty plane.

As it happens, the three heads of government who officially preside over the lives of New Yorkers at the local, state, and national levels are all devotees not only of the *mens sana in corpore sano* philosophy but of the view that *corpus sanum* is best—and most worthily—demonstrated on one playing field or another. No one seems to have raised serious questions about whether the performances of sportsmen George Bush and David Dinkins in the games of their choice are anything less than sportsmanlike. Mario Cuomo appears to be another proposition entirely, at least in the view of an editorial last month in *Newsday*, a liberal-minded paper that endorsed Cuomo in all three of his successful campaigns for governor. In the midst of the budget wars in Albany—which in many ways had offered an even more grotesque spectacle than those in this city—the *Newsday* editorial looked back admiringly on the Governor of a few years ago. It described him as "a philosopher-king, a man of intellect, principle and reason," and then asked, "Where have you gone, Mario Cuomo?" invoking, without mentioning it, Simon and Garfunkel's 1968 "A nation turns its lonely eyes to you"—a cry to another athlete with an Italian name, whose baseball career, of course, made history, in contrast to Cuomo's brief service on a Pittsburgh farm team. The rest of the editorial gave the impression that a member of the *Newsday* staff had just lost a bruising game—probably basketball—to the Governor. Cuomo was described as willful, contentious, suspicious, guilty of ripping apart political civility. He was also self-righteous, imperious, smug, and disdainful, with a governing style that consisted of shoving, pushing, and

bullying. The editorial quoted a crony—no squeamishness about relying on anonymous sources here—as saying, "He's a total animal on the basketball court," and added, "Now the rest of us understand, too." Cuomo's recent actions as governor, the editorial asserted, raised grave doubts about the kind of Presidential campaign he would run and about how he would perform as President.

Not mentioning this dire warning, a Rowland Evans and Robert Novak column this month concluded that because of the way the Democratic-primary process is set up for next year it would lead to an early nomination, "probably Cuomo, if he wants it." Their designated probable nominee announced the day after the Fourth (which was the day the state budget was finally passed) that he would often be speaking outside New York in the near future. Last month, Evans and Novak wrote that Dinkins was telling political figures in Washington that if Cuomo should encourage the Financial Control Board to usurp the financial independence of the city he would "quietly put out the word against the governor to black politicians across the country." Meanwhile, with *his* budget finally passed, Dinkins announced plans to visit South Africa to counsel the newly empowered black leaders there about how democracy works.

First, however, Dinkins celebrated his sixty-fourth birthday, on the night of July 10th, by raising a hundred and fifty thousand dollars at a fund-raiser for his 1993 reelection campaign—what he called the first post-doomsday party. Earlier in the day, he had stopped by Ellen's Café, across from City Hall, where Ellen, a onetime Miss Subways, presented him with a large cake in the shape of City Hall, to which had been added a green-frosting tennis court. The plan was for the Mayor to be presented with an appropriately titled record—another one from the sixties—the Beatles' "When I'm Sixty-four" ("Will you still need me? Will you still feed me?"). When he opened the package, it turned out that whoever had picked up the record had come back instead with another Beatles issue: "I Am the Walrus." On its flip side was "Hello Goodbye," which the Mayor did not play at his reelection fund-raiser.

—ANDY LOGAN



ANNALS OF SPORT

GOING TO THE MOON

WHENEVER the Moscow Red Devils go barnstorming through a foreign country, they bring along about twenty baseball players, a manager, a couple of coaches, and an equipment wrangler named Arkady, who has a bristly crewcut and often dresses in jeans, a T-shirt, and a leather flight jacket bearing an insignia patch from the West Babylon Fire Department. In some ways, Arkady is as important to the team as German Gulbitt, its crack pitcher, because he is in charge of selling the souvenirs that provide the Red Devils with some extra cash to supplement their monthly salary of roughly two hundred and fifty rubles. Before each game, Arkady commandeers a prominent spot in the grandstand and spreads out his wares, which include lacquered boxes, nesting dolls, cheap bracelets, Red Army hats, Rasputin caps of fake fur, Red Devils baseball cards, and a variety of Soviet watches that do everything from registering blood pressure to gauging barometric pressure.

There is a set price for every item, of

course, but it is set in Arkady's head and can be adjusted, depending on demand. On the March afternoon when I met him, for instance, while the Red Devils were playing an exhibition game at Diablo Valley College, east of San Francisco, he was bargaining with a woman over the price of a nesting doll in the shape of Mikhail Gorbachev.

"Expensive in Russia," he said. "You can pay twenty-five dollars?"

"Well, I don't know," the woman replied, sounding as if she were less worried about the cost than about the implications of buying a Communist knickknack.

Arkady lifted Gorby and broke him apart to reveal a smaller doll inside. "Look, Brezhnev," Arkady smiled. Inside Brezhnev was Nikita Khrushchev. Inside Khrushchev was Joseph Stalin. And inside Stalin was a very tiny Vladimir Lenin.

"How about twenty dollars?"

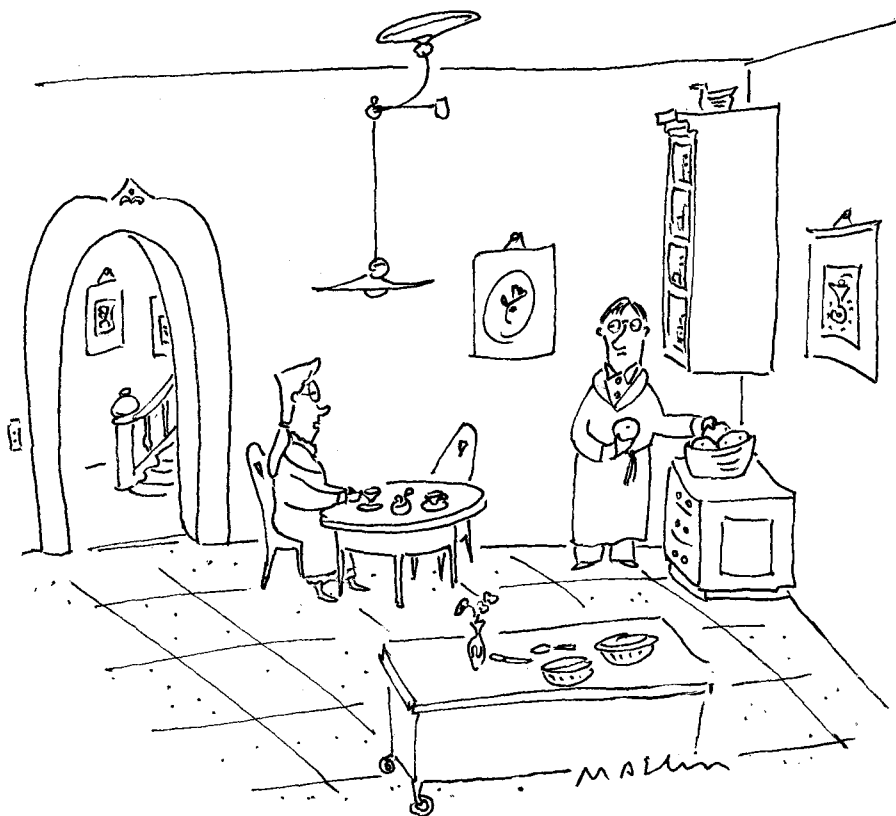
"Sure," said Arkady, tossing in a hammer-and-sickle pin.

The Red Devils were making a whirlwind, two-week tour of some

junior colleges and high schools in the Bay Area, and Diablo Valley was their third stop. I had looked them up after reading a little piece about them in the newspaper. It told how a customs inspector at the Moscow airport had interrogated Andrei Tzelikovsky, the right fielder, about the strange wooden object he was holding—a baseball bat. Tzelikovsky explained that it was for playing an American sport, baseball. "I'm going to play baseball in America," he added, to which the inspector, still eying the bat, replied, "Tell me, how far are you supposed to throw it?" After that, Tzelikovsky and the other ballplayers passed successfully through security, survived an arduous flight, and were now boarded at a Marriott Hotel in San Ramon, an East Bay suburb, where their rooms, outfitted with cable TV, executive-style desks, and miniature bottles of shampoo, were grander than anything in Moscow.

For a while after arriving, the Red Devils had suffered from jet lag, which was complicated by the newness of everything they saw in San Ramon—clean, sparkling buildings everywhere, all of them untouched by history—and although they claimed to be over their symptoms, they were still having some trouble on the ball field. They had dropped their first two exhibition games by serious margins, and the scoreboard at Diablo Valley showed that they were currently behind by twenty-one runs in the top of the seventh inning. That was to be expected, perhaps, since the Red Devils, for all their enthusiasm, are probably not much better than a topnotch high-school team in the United States, but at the same time it was a far cry from their performance at home during the 1990 season, when they'd won all but two of their twenty-eight games and had defeated their arch-rivals, the Red Army club, to take the baseball championship of the U.S.S.R.

Baseball is such a new sport in the Soviet Union that these discrepancies are bound to occur. The Russians love gymnastics, they wax poetic over soccer, but to date most of them have not been tempted to pick up a mitt or put on a pair of spikes. Until the era of *glasnost*, in fact, you could have driven from Ashkhabad to Zyryanka without ever



"I remember a time when you thought sectioning my grapefruit was fun."

bumping into anybody playing catch. Only when the International Olympic Committee voted, in the fall of 1986, to make baseball part of the Olympic Games did the Soviet authorities decide to sponsor teams. The Red Devils began their efforts the following spring with a modest advertisement in a Moscow sporting gazette, which invited interested athletes, gifted or merely courageous, to attend a training camp at a local university.

Andrei Tzelikovsky was among the first to report. He is the team's best speaker of English, so he was acting as spokesman on the California tour. (Most Red Devils appear to have acquired only one complete English sentence, which is "Would you like to buy this?") Tall, fair-haired, and broad-shouldered, with an innocent, boyish face, Tzelikovsky looks younger than he is—twenty-two—even though he sometimes carries himself with a seriousness of purpose that would be more appropriate to a nuclear physicist. This was his fourth trip to the States, and he was starting to learn the media ropes. When we were introduced, I tested his grasp of the vernacular by commenting that he was "getting a lot of ink," and he just blinked, nodded resolutely, and said, "Ya, I know." He has a profound sense of the game's traditions and its lore, which has led him to adopt, in homage, a bad habit: he chews tobacco (Red Man) mixed with shredded bubble gum, spitting so stylishly that his all-time favorite player, Shoeless Joe Jackson, would be proud.

Tzelikovsky has a knack for telling a story, and he once explained to me how he developed his unusual affection for baseball. He said that at the age of six he was admitted to a Red Army volleyball academy in Moscow where talented children are groomed for stardom. But four years later his father accepted a post with the Soviet trade mission in Montreal. By chance, the Tzelikovskys rented an apartment right across from the Montreal Expos' stadium, and almost immediately little Andrei grew curious about all the noise and excitement over there, pleading with his parents to take him to a game until his father finally broke down and bought some tickets. Bored, Tzelikovsky *père* went back to the apartment at the end of the second inning, but his son remained seated, watching in wide-eyed wonder until the last out. The experience turned him into a rabid Expos fan,

and he followed them on TV, collecting baseball books and magazines and even a few instructional videos, which he watched again and again on his VCR.

When the Tzelikovskys returned to Moscow, in 1983, Andrei reentered the volleyball academy, but his heart wasn't in it anymore. (Every time he says the words "Red Army," he makes a face, as if he'd just been served a plate of month-old cabbage.) He no longer dreamed of being famous for spiking shots over a net; instead, he wanted to be a baseball player. There were no diamonds anywhere in the city, though, so he practiced at a neighborhood park every Sunday, using a stick and a tennis ball to give his friends batting instruction. He did not touch a real bat in Russia until he went out for the team. His memories of the training camp are still vivid. The scene was chaotic, he says, at least in the early days, with dozens of fit-looking, well-intentioned Soviet men gripping baseballs and pegging them to one another, often missing their intended target by more than a yard. Still, out of the chaos a number of promising athletes emerged, and they formed the nucleus of the Red Devils: four tennis players, an Olympic medallist in handball, Tzelikovsky himself, and three former javelin throwers, who gave up factory jobs to be pitchers.

"It was difficult at first," Tzelikovsky told me, tugging at the bill of his red cap, which had the letters "CCCP" stitched in gold across its crown. "Our equipment was not very good. We just had some old stuff that Cuban players had left behind. Our own players didn't know the rules. Sometimes, if they hit the ball they ran to third base instead of to first. And our Soviet umpires didn't know the rules, either. They just made them up for their own pleasure. How could we argue with them? The first game we ever played, we lost 48-0, to a visiting team from Nicaragua. We needed coaching very badly. One afternoon on the metro, I was riding home from a game in my uniform, and an American, a student, came up to me. He had pitched for Colgate University—do you know about Colgate?—so I asked him to come out and teach us about curveballs." Tzelikovsky paused to shrug. "In this way," he said, "we began to improve."

WHEN the Red Devils were still down by twenty-one runs in the middle of the seventh inning, the vari-

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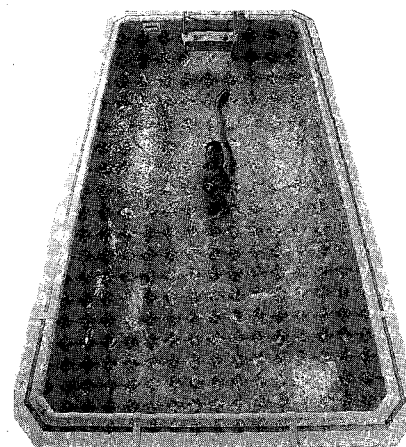
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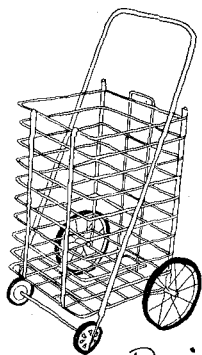
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ous coaches, umpires, factotums, and functionaries in attendance at Diablo Valley reached a wise and probably merciful decision, relying on some English and some sign language, to call the game. There was a little daylight left, though, and the Soviet players took advantage of it by retreating to the batting cages and laboring at their hitting until dusk, pointing up how disciplined and hardworking they are. If you're a Red Devil, you don't want to miss a practice session unless you have a good excuse. Alexei Pavlinchuk, the team's manager, a Sverdlovsk native with fiercely penetrating eyes, runs a tight ship and doles out fines with abandon. For instance, anyone caught drinking without permission automatically loses half his salary for the month. Smoking without permission is also frowned upon, and costs the perpetrator a fourth of his salary. If you curse, you pay ten rubles for the first offense and double that for the second. There is no appeal.

While the Red Devils were taking their cuts, I sat in the stands talking to Tim Hickerson, who was largely responsible for bringing the Soviet team to California. A former minor leaguer in the Chicago Cubs system, Hickerson is an intelligent, soft-spoken man in his mid-thirties who loves baseball as much as Andrei Tzelikovsky does. As the proprietor of a fledgling travel agency in San Francisco, he arranges vacations abroad for American amateurs who want to play against foreign teams in their natural habitat, and does the same sort of thing for foreign teams that want to come to the United States. The Red Devils were part of one of those exchange programs. In July of 1990, Hickerson had sent a team from Monte Vista High School, in Danville, near San Ramon, on a ten-day trip to Moscow, and now a boosters' group from Monte Vista was reciprocating by hosting the Soviets, providing them with complimentary lodging and meals along with part of their airfare.

The Red Devils' next game was in Stockton, at Delta Junior College, and when Hickerson offered me a ride I accepted. He picked me up at the Marriott in an old Chevy Nova, cream-colored, whose odometer had rolled over at least once. The car made odd sounds. It did not inspire confidence. But Hickerson, who sometimes drives a cab

to make ends meet, appeared to be in control of the vehicle. Although he isn't in playing condition anymore, he still has an athlete's reflexes. He was an All-Conference center fielder during his university days, at Berkeley—Jackie Jensen recruited him—but he's built more like a catcher, thick through the chest and stubby in the legs. I mentioned this to him, and he said that he used to be taller, but he'd fallen off a roof while working as a roofer eleven years ago and had shrunk a little.



Demi

As an exercise, I once scribbled out a list of all the jobs Hickerson has held, and it read like an author's bio from the he-man epoch of American literature, when no dust jacket was complete without a catalogue of unpredictable employment. In addition to being a roofer, he'd been a logger, an usher, a reporter for the *People's Daily World*, a baseball manager in the Italian major leagues, the stage manager for a travelling French magician, and a batting coach in Managua. Then, too, you had to take his aspirations into account. He had wanted to act, to direct films, and also to be a writer in the way of Hemingway or Henry Miller. His paternal grandfather, Harold Hickerson, knew Miller well and appears in "The Rosy Crucifixion" as a character called Arthur Raymond. Harold Hickerson was a concert pianist, but he joined the Communist Party, quit the stage, and became a union organizer for the Wobblies. Both of Tim's parents were politically progressive as well, and they made their home in Berkeley, where Tim grew up.

We had spectacular weather for our trip. The night before, an Alaskan storm had blown through, leaving the rolling green hills of the East Bay dusted with snow. Big cumulus clouds moved across the horizon, through a sky of the purest blue. Acacias were in bright-yellow bloom. Creeks that had been dead dry a month ago were running high and muddy, spilling over rocks and flowing down past black oaks and mountain laurels. There was a sweet fragrance of spring in the air, and I found myself thinking about Tzelikovsky, who would already be in Stockton, dressed in his uniform and eager for action.

Hickerson had been daydreaming about baseball, too. It is his central obsession, and he said that if his travel

business clicks he hopes to coach or play in Japan and Australia, and maybe in Cuba—anywhere, really, that he can get a game. He has already played in Moscow, having gone there last summer with a team of over-the-hill baseball fantasists, among them an attorney, a doctor, and a psychologist. (The psychologist vanished for thirty-six hours, accompanying a Russian black marketeer on a run to Leningrad to swap currency and trinkets.) Bill (Space man) Lee was also on the squad. For the privilege of engaging the Red Devils on their home turf, the American wannabes paid Hickerson about three thousand dollars apiece. Hickerson had been to the Soviet Union before, as a delegate from Athletes United for Peace, a group founded after the 1980 Olympics, and he informed his charges that they were in for a cultural experience, not a Club Med holiday. They should expect sterile rooms, flimsy towels, rough toilet paper, and lots of cheese, sausage, caviar, and heavy brown bread.

If Hickerson has any regrets about his devotion to baseball, they focus on his failure to make the big leagues. After leaving Berkeley in 1977, he played with the Bradenton Cubs in the Florida rookie league and did well enough to be asked to the Cubs' instructional-league camp that fall. The instructional league is something of a showcase and frequently serves as a stepping stone to the majors, and when Hickerson hit .349 in a forty-game season he was sure that he'd be offered a AAA contract. Instead, the Cubs offered him a contract that was roughly similar to the one he'd had in the rookie league. He accepted the contract very reluctantly, and when he went to Arizona for spring training, in 1978, he had some run-ins with the Cubs front office and was dropped from the squad. He figured that on the basis of his hitting another team would grab him, but he was turned down everywhere, much to his disappointment. (His Bradenton coach, Pete Reiser, hinted to him once that his grandfather's ties to the Communist Party had cost him his chance.) Whatever the case, Hickerson handled the dismissal poorly and became a little lost and purposeless until, in 1979, through the intercession of a baseball pal from Berkeley, he landed a manager's job in San Giovanni in Persiceto, Italy.

Hickerson had never heard of San Giovanni in Persiceto, but he learned that it was not far from Bologna, and

was a city of about twenty thousand. He lived there in one room at the Hotel Leone and earned about five hundred dollars a month for directing a team of semi-pros, who played their games on weekends. Of necessity, he became fluent in Italian, and he embraced Italy for its graciousness and sensuality. He loved Italian food, women, and wine, and made many friends. In the off-season, when there wasn't any baseball, he sometimes stayed in San Giovanni anyway and supported himself by giving English lessons. In all, he managed five different Italian clubs over the next few years. The players he dealt with could be peculiarly challenging in their demands. Hickerson once had an American transplant who wouldn't practice unless he could get bacon and eggs at a trattoria every morning. He had an outfielder who tried to catch fly balls by holding his mitt stationary in front of his face. He had a pitcher who declined to issue intentional walks, because they reflected badly on his masculinity.

"After my first season at San Giovanni, I went back to California for a couple of years and then took a job in Castenaso, another town near Bologna," Hickerson said, flipping on his directional signal as we approached Stockton. "I got fired for arguing with the team's owner. He kept ordering me around, telling me what to do. I thought that was it for Italy, so I went home again, but then I changed my mind and came back in the fall of 1982 for one more try. Nobody wanted me, though, and by the summer I was sitting around in San Giovanni with a bottle of whiskey and a plane ticket to the United States. But on the day I was going to leave I got a message that the *presidente* of the Sant'Arcangelo di Romagna club was coming to see me. He pulled up in a huge Peugeot sedan. He was a big, fat guy, maybe three hundred pounds, whose passion was collecting stamps. He asked me to take over Sant'Arcangelo for the second half of the season, and gave me a car, an apartment, and even a washing machine. I had a great success there and turned the team from losers into winners. We were based not far from Rimini, and we used to drink Chianti and swim in the Adriatic to celebrate our victories. The Florence Lions, one of Italy's top teams, hired me away from Sant'Arcangelo, but they wanted a miracle from me, and when I didn't deliver it they fired me. After that, the only club that wanted me was Godo.

Do you know Godo?" I said that I didn't, and Hickerson said, "Godo is in the second division."

THE two oldest players on the Red Devils, Leonid Korneyev and German Gulbitt—thirty-four and thirty-six, respectively—are pitchers, although Korneyev, who carries a big bat and hit .434 in 1990, doubles as a first baseman. By virtue of their maturity, they sometimes seemed to be enjoying the tour more than the younger players, not taking things quite so seriously. At the Marriott one night, Gulbitt came up to me dressed in an incredible suit with inch-wide gray and white stripes and tried to sell me a Soviet watch. When I said "*Nyet*," politely and with a smile on my face, Gulbitt reacted merrily, as if we were just messing around, and gave me a gentle little pat on the back before continuing to work his way through the lobby.

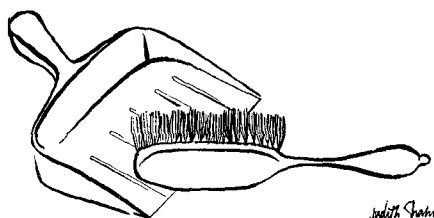
Korneyev was on the mound at Delta Junior College when Hickerson and I arrived. Heavyset and powerful-looking, he throws hard for a Red Devil, and the Mustangs of Delta were having difficulty timing his pitches. To the astonishment of practically everyone, the score was tied at 3—all in the bottom of the third inning. The ballpark at the college was really very pretty and well maintained, and this might have contributed to the Red Devils' elevating the level of their game. There were dugouts and new bleachers, the grass had recently been cut, and an outfield wall (a row of tall bushes behind a chain-link fence) bound all the elements together in a sweet symmetry. A decent crowd had turned out, too, more than a hundred people, and everyone would laugh good-naturedly when, say, Alexander Krupenchenkov came to bat and a student announcer on the P.A. system tried to wrap his tongue around the unfamiliar syllables.

Stockton has always had a reputation as a conservative city, so it surprised me when the fans applauded the Soviet players for making a nice catch or stealing a base, but Hickerson told me he'd observed this phenomenon every time he'd

seen the Red Devils compete in the United States. Apparently, Americans were touched by their earnestness and wanted to alert them to the fact that their cross-cultural gesture, however randomly generated, was appreciated. As we sat watching the game, another thing that Hickerson had said echoed in my mind—that because the Red Devils had learned their baseball as adults, their movements on the field always seemed slightly unnatural. For instance, although they threw with marvellous accuracy, there was usually a noticeable hitch, or a tiny pause, *before* the throw, which indicated that a thought had preceded the action. The smooth, silky quality of intuition that sends a shortstop gliding toward the hole in advance of a ball's being hit there was missing from their play.

The Red Devils were also lacking in infield chatter. A kind of loose-limbed, high-spirited jive runs through an American team when it's humming, but the Soviets were not yet comfortable enough on a baseball diamond to relax. Sometimes they were as studiously correct as pupils at a dancing school, concentrating so hard on their steps that they scarcely heard the melody. The word "fun" was not a constant in their vocabulary. But, on the other hand, they were still in the early stages of their evolution, and had only just reached the point where they were starting to invent some baseball slang. They called the diamond, in Russian, "the square." A pop fly was a "candle." If a player made a sharp, precise throw, someone might say, "Sergei, that was a real bayonet!" The area where the infield dirt gives way to the crescent-shaped grass was known as "the moon," and this allowed the Red Devils to indulge a lyrical impulse by saying, when Tzelikovsky trotted to his position, "Andrei has gone to the moon."

Like most forcibly retired baseball managers, Hickerson has trouble attending a game without offering his opinions, and at Stockton he kept second-guessing Pavlinchuk. Doubtless Hickerson would have liked to don a Red Devils uniform and assume the managerial helm. Although his Russian was limited to a few phrases, he knew some of the Soviet players by name and had conversed with them both here and abroad, often through an interpreter. He had even discussed politics with them, and had found some solid support for Boris Yeltsin. If a ballplayer



asked him for some batting tips, he was glad to oblige. Being able to help in such a way amounted to a comeback for him.

Unfortunately for the Red Devils, the tide began to turn in the fifth inning. They stayed in contention, tying the score again at 5-all, but the Mustangs had the home-field advantage, and they chipped away at the Soviet pitchers and went on to win by four runs. This was the closest the Red Devils had ever come to a victory in California, but they still didn't look very happy. In spite of the fact that they were acknowledged beginners, it was evident that they weren't fond of losing to Americans. They had a diplomatic attitude about it, though, and immediately embarked on their postgame ritual, emptying their duffelbags and displaying the goods that they'd brought along to barter. They were not as overburdened with merchandise as Arkady was. Instead, they had concentrated on T-shirts and sweatshirts.

The Mustangs stepped tentatively forward and fingered the clothing, as they might at a flea market. Yevgeny Puchkov (.444 average in 1990) had a deal going with one Mustang, who wanted to trade an old mitt. Along with generating some slang, the Red Devils are gradually acquiring nicknames, and Puchkov, who has a brooding countenance, is known as Mubarak, because he resembles the Egyptian President. Infielder Ilya Bogatirev picked up the moniker Home Boy on the team's last American swing, while Alexander Vidyaev, a second baseman, must toil under the weight of a Russian diminutive—Malenky (Little One)—which, though it's endearing, he hates.

"You got any of those fur hats?" the Mustang asked. "That's what I want to trade you for."

Puchkov examined the mitt on offer, which was streaked and pitted and begrimed and had turned an off-putting shade of blackish brown. "No hats," he said, before reaching into his bag and pulling out a tank top that showed a cartoonish Gorby and several apparatuses sitting astride Harley-Davidson motorcycles. The legend beneath the illustration, done in heavy-metal style, read "KREMLIN CREW," and Gorby had the middle finger of his hand extended.

The tank top made the Mustang giggle. "No way I want that," he

said. "I want one of them fur hats." "No hats," Puchkov informed him again, shaking his head wearily, as if the Mustang had overlooked a tremendous bargain, and he jammed the shirt back in his bag. And then German Gulbitt cruised by with his copious supply of watches.

EVERY dedicated ballplayer keeps a mental record of how he's doing at any given time, and when people asked Andrei Tzelikovsky for a run-down of his stats after the Delta Junior College game he said, "I am three for nine at the plate. I have made no fielding errors." That was a satisfactory performance, he felt, although not exactly thrilling. Tzelikovsky wished that he had the uncanny grace of his batting hero, Ted Williams, whose book "The Science of Hitting" he'd read more than twenty times. Once, while we were chatting, I brought up a famous item of trivia concerning Williams' eyesight, which was supposed to be so keenly developed that he could see, in minute particulars, his bat making contact with a ball. "Ya, I know," Tzelikovsky said. Then he told me that he hoped Pavlinchuk might let him pitch an inning or two before the tour was over. He had pitched in Moscow, he said, and a radar gun had clocked his fastball at seventy-eight miles per hour.

On his free afternoons, Tzelikovsky had been joining his teammates on field trips coordinated by the Red Devils' hosts in Monte Vista. The players went to Chinatown in San Francisco, and

they took in a Warriors' basketball practice in Oakland and were granted a private audience with Sarunas Marciulionis, a Lithuanian on the Golden State club. (The Red Devils have one Lithuanian on their roster, and he will

not wear a CCCP cap; he substitutes a green-and-gold number from the Oakland A's.) Most often, though, as a sort of introduction to American culture, they were bused to various suburban malls and invited to do some shopping. This put them in a bit of a fix, since they had only a little ready cash, but they learned rather quickly to bypass Macy's and Nordstrom and head directly for discount stores like K mart, where, at rock-bottom prices, they bought fanny packs, pseudo-Walkmans, and cheap sets of carving knives.

Sometimes when there were no spe-

cial activities planned, Tzelikovsky just stayed in his room at the hotel. He relished the spaciousness and the privacy, and watched ballgames and movies on TV. At his executive-style desk, he wrote postcards to his friends and his family. An only child, he still lived with his mother and father, even though they were disappointed in him for dropping volleyball (and the safety of a career in the Red Army) for the iffiness of Soviet baseball. Out of his salary contributed fifty rubles a month toward household expenses. The Tzelikovskys were feeling a financial pinch these days, like most other Russians. The shelves in Moscow's food stores were frequently empty. The lines of customers were long. As an antidote to all this, Tzelikovsky made it a point to treat himself to lunch every afternoon at the McDonald's in Red Square—it was his only luxury. In his scrupulous way, he'd been comparing the McDonald's cuisine in the Bay Area with the franchised food at home. The burgers tasted the same, he said, but in the milkshakes he detected subtle differences.

The most time Tzelikovsky has ever spent in the United States was in 1990. That spring, he played ball in a program at Carson-Newman College, in Tennessee, and in August he went to Baltimore, where he met Mark McGwire. The Baltimore trip was costly for him, because it meant that he'd miss an opportunity to travel to Italy with the Red Devils for a series of exhibition games. Ah, well, Tzelikovsky had thought, you can't have everything. When he got back to Moscow, he worked out with some college players to keep himself in shape while the team was away, but such is his connection to the swirling forces of baseball fate that an amazing thing happened. Sadaharu Oh, Japan's greatest baseball player and a figure of near-mythological proportions, stopped by the college on a visit, and Tzelikovsky, who would have missed Oh had he gone to Italy, saw him give a batting demonstration, and then—better yet—had an opportunity to speak with him and get some advice.

To Tzelikovsky, Sadaharu Oh said, "Baseball is coöperation, not competition. A pitcher is your friend, not your enemy. He is sending you a gift, and it is your responsibility as a batter to send it back to him."

One night toward the end of the tour, Tzelikovsky had to go to San Francisco for a radio interview, and we agreed



to ride in together with Tim Hickerson as our chauffeur. Waiting in the hotel lobby for the guest of honor to finish his shower, Hickerson looked a bit ill at ease in the presence of so much marble and glitter. As a red-diaper baby, he'd been raised in a climate of ideological tumult and had the political lefty's inherent mistrust of possessions. In his current economic state, an Italian meal at a North Beach restaurant amounted to a splurge. But Hickerson felt no ambivalence about starting a new business at a time in life when some of his contemporaries were already looking forward to retiring. "I like travelling," he had told me once. "I like the Russians. I like being in uniform and chewing tobacco. I like bullshitting. I get to be a little boy again."

When Tzelikovsky swept into the lobby, clean and neat in his street clothes, we piled into the Nova and took off for the city. Tzelikovsky showed no signs of nervousness. He apprised us that he'd been on the radio before, in Baltimore. And once he was in front of a microphone at KSFO-AM he proved to be absolutely in his element, nimbly fielding questions from callers.

"Hiya, Andrei. I was just wondering, you admire any particular American players?"

"Ya. Here are three—Lenny Dykstra, Bob Welch, and Mark McGwire. I met Mark McGwire in Baltimore. I have a letter he wrote to me in Moscow."

"Andrei, how do you keep up with baseball when you're over there in Russia?"

"It's difficult. I listen to Voice of America for the scores."

"Hey, Andrei. It's cool that you're here in California, man. What do you think about Rickey Henderson? He's making, like—what?—three million dollars?"

"Rickey is worth it."

"You really think that?"

"Rickey is worth every penny."

After the interview, Tzelikovsky wanted to peek into the Hard Rock Cafe. (One T-shirt that the Red Devils were selling had the restaurant's emblem on it, with the words "Hard Rock" in Cyrillic.) While Hickerson idled at the curb, I led Tzelikovsky through the door and into a dining room decked out with electric guitars, Elvis photos, gold records, and other rock-and-roll memorabilia. The place must have appeared unimaginably bright and

shiny to Tzelikovsky, but he didn't seem to be impressed, and said as we left that he had always thought it was a private club. Then we parked at a McDonald's nearby and sidled past a panhandler, and Hickerson bought Andrei a dinner of a Big Mac, fries, some kind of pie-like thing, and a chocolate milkshake, all to go.

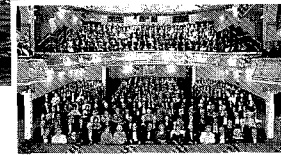
And then we were on the freeway again. It was a moonless night, and we drove through a landscape of farms, ranches, and open fields interspersed with new suburbs and industrial parks. On the radio, Tzelikovsky had been careful not to say anything critical of the United States, so I asked him to tell me, in all honesty, if there was anything about the country that he didn't like. He meditated for a minute, thoughtfully chewing, and said, "The people here live very far from one another." After that, we changed the subject back to baseball, and Tzelikovsky spoke of his eagerness for the 1991 U.S.S.R. season to begin. The Soviet first division was going to expand to ten teams, so the Red Devils would get to play fifty-four games, not just twenty-eight. There were supposed to be teams in Kiev, Vladivostok, Odessa, and Tbilisi. At the mention of Tbilisi, Hickerson got excited and said, "Tbilisi? I'd love to play in Georgia."

In the morning, the Red Devils had a game with the Monte Vista High School team, and the weather did them a sort of favor, turning cool and blustery and reminding them of Moscow. Tzelikovsky was in a batting cage when I got there, practicing his swing, and after he finished we chatted by the dug-out. He proudly showed me his most recent acquisition—a plaque with Mark McGwire's picture on it, which he had bartered for at a sporting-goods store. But then he became gloomy, and told me that he hadn't yet bought any gifts for his parents, because he had no cash left. It occurred to me that it might not be a bad thing to own a nesting doll, so we haggled for a while over the one Tzelikovsky had in his duffel-bag, and settled on a price of twenty dollars. When I gave him the bill, he folded it in quarters, stuck it in a pocket, shook hands with me, and said in his serious manner, "Thank you very much." And then he tapped the dirt from his spikes, adjusted his cap, and ran briskly toward the outfield.

—BILL BARICH



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BOOKS

A Woman of No Importance

THE INVISIBLE WOMAN: THE STORY OF NELLY TERNAN AND CHARLES DICKENS," by Claire Tomalin (Knopf; \$25), is a judiciously sympathetic biography of Charles Dickens' mistress, Ellen Lawless Ternan. It recounts, in an easy, conversational style, the facts that survived a conspiracy of concealment by Dickens, Nelly, and their heirs—a conspiracy that eradicated almost every trace of the young woman with whom the middle-aged novelist fell in love. Dickens started burning letters in his lifetime; more bonfires followed his funeral, in 1870, and the funerals of friends and family. Dickens' intimates (John Forster, his friend, biographer, and executor) knew Nelly, and his acquaintances (Longfellow, Browning) knew about her, but in print nineteenth-century discretion prevailed well into the twentieth. Ms. Tomalin admits that there is much we may never learn, but she has managed to recover a real human being. Without exaggerating Nelly's gifts—"In the scale of things Nelly is not an important person. No one would have begun to think about her were it not for Dickens"—the author convinces us that the small, blue-eyed blonde we see in contemporary photographs was an intelligent, cultivated, articulate woman. In this thoughtful account, Dickens' Nelly turns out to be no Dark Lady but a Victorian Good Woman who became mysterious because she thought she was a Fallen Woman.

Before Ellen Ternan disappeared into her lover's life and custody, she was highly visible: she had been an actress. Born in 1839, she was the youngest of three sisters who were the third generation of theatre folk; her family had trouped with the great from the days of Mrs. Siddons. The girls all went on the stage as children, but

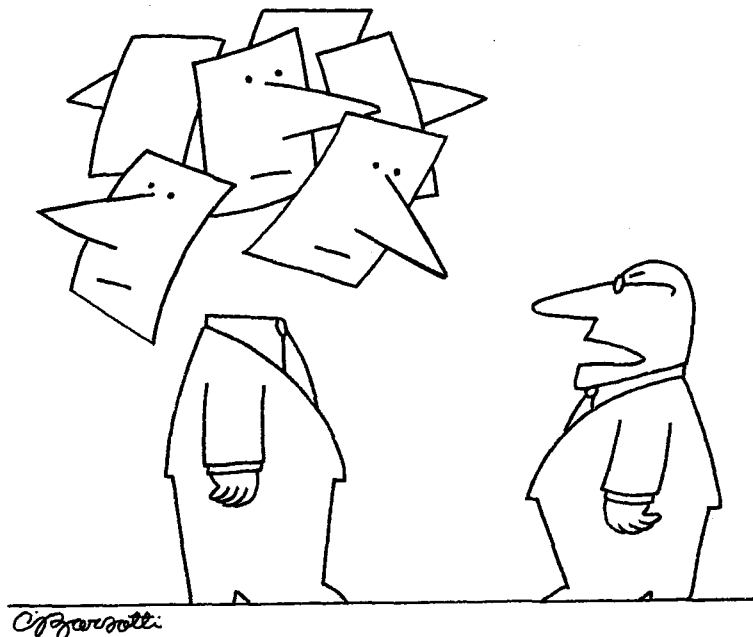
found it difficult to make the transition from Infant Phenomenon to leading lady. The Ternans were reliable professionals, and mother and daughters (Nelly's father died in 1846) were recommended to Dickens in the summer of 1857, when he was looking for actresses to appear with him in Manchester in a benefit performance of "The Frozen Deep," a melodrama written by Wilkie Collins. Dickens was forty-five to Nelly's eighteen; he was married and the father of nine living children. He had been a celebrity since the publication of "The Pickwick Papers," in 1836, and his vast, enthusiastic international public believed that his life exemplified the domestic virtues that his writing extolled. Dickens' recent biographers agree that after twenty-one years of marriage he only tolerated his wife, Catherine; he brought her along to see his Manchester triumph, but before 1857 ended he moved out of their bedroom into his dressing room and blocked up the door between. The next year, the Dickenses separated. As the law then stood, he had no grounds for divorce, and Catherine remained his wife until he died.

Ms. Tomalin has found quite a few descriptions of Nelly in her later years: she kept her good looks, and is recalled as widely read in several languages, and interested in literature, politics,

music, and the theatre. But except for references to her beauty Ms. Tomalin has found next to nothing about young Nelly—Nelly as she was when Dickens met her. His scattered lovesick allusions don't describe her; they describe her effect on him. Ms. Tomalin offers plenty of documentation of the Ternans' careers, and, discussing Nelly's theatrical background, properly emphasizes the discipline rather than the glamour. From childhood on, actresses were trained to be punctual and hardworking: when they weren't acting or rehearsing, they were learning lines or designing and sewing their costumes. Still, there were rewards: touring companies were floating islands of sociability, and the theatre offered women not only financial independence but a chance to exercise authority as directors and managers. Nelly played in the classics and also in vaudeville interludes and farce. She learned to dance and sing, and to speak and carry herself like a lady. Yet she wasn't a lady. By definition, a lady did not work for money. And actresses were thought to be unchaste: Ms. Tomalin quotes from an article in the 1797 *Encyclopædia Britannica* which states that merely displaying one's art for pay was a sort of prostitution; as late as 1898, the theatre critic Clement Scott wrote, "It is nearly impossible for a woman to

remain pure who adopts the stage as a profession."

There seems no reason to doubt Nelly's chastity, however, and Ms. Tomalin doesn't think that Mrs. Ternan, who cherished elevated views of the theatre and of the Ternan ancestry, and had been a faithful wife, put her youngest daughter up for sale. The biographer isn't really sure how Dickens overcame the Ternans' resistance to a liaison that permanently declassified Nelly,



"Are you listening to me?"

though she observes, with all other Dickens students, that Dickens always managed to get his way.

In any case, Dickens began helping the financially hard-pressed Ternans in 1858; he sent Nelly's oldest sister, Fanny, with her mother as chaperon, to study singing in Italy. Then, early in 1859, while Fanny was still abroad, she and Maria, the middle sister, appear as the purchasers of a substantial London house near Regent's Park, which they transferred to Nelly when she reached her majority. There Nelly, who left the stage in 1859, read Dickens' proofs and sang duets with him accompanied by Francesco Berger, who had composed and conducted the incidental music for "The Frozen Deep." Nobody knows where Nelly lived between 1862 and 1865, when she and Dickens were in a railway accident on a train returning from France. Ms. Tomalin, noting that Dickens spent a great deal of time in France during those years, guesses that Nelly had moved there, possibly to bear him a child in secret. Much, much later, two of Dickens' children, Kate and Henry, told confidants that Nelly did give birth to a son, who died in infancy. There's no documentary proof, and Ms. Tomalin doesn't insist.

Ms. Tomalin suspects that Nelly grew bored after she returned from France. She rented her London house, and waited for Dickens first in a cottage at Slough and later in a grander house at Peckham. For company she had her maid, her dogs, and occasional visits from her mother and sisters; for amusement she read all the serious books of the day. Though Dickens burned most of his pocket diaries, one, for the year 1867, survived by chance—he lost it while visiting New York, and it ended up in the New York Public Library. It shows that he spent about a third of his time on tour, giving his famous readings; a third at his official residence, Gad's Hill Place, near Rochester, where his sister-in-law Georgina Hogarth looked after his children and acted as his hostess; and a third with Nelly. Nelly may have been restless and lonely, but she behaved toward Dickens like a concerned, attentive wife; Dickens told his American publisher that she was the only person to notice the symptoms of a mild stroke he suffered during one of his readings. Georgina and Kate recognized her place in his life: they

sent for Nelly when Dickens lay dying at Gad's Hill.

AFTER Dickens' death, Nelly entered middle-class society, supported by money he left her and sponsored by her sisters, who had married and left the stage. In 1863, Maria had become Mrs. Rowland Taylor; her husband's family were well-to-do brewers in Oxford. In 1866, Fanny had married Thomas Trollope, whom she had met through Dickens. Trollope, a brother of Anthony, was also a writer, and Fanny herself began writing novels. (Although Dickens later cooled toward Fanny, he and his son Charley serialized several of her novels in their magazine *All the Year Round*.) Nelly helped Fanny on her last book, published in 1895—a biography of her mother-in-law, the writer Frances Trollope. Maria left her husband in 1873, studied art at the Slade and in Italy, and eventually became the Italian correspondent for the London *Standard*; she took an adventurous journey through Tunisia, and published a book about it.

Before Maria decamped, she brought Nelly to a party at Oxford given by an undergraduate, George Wharton Robinson. Though he was twelve years younger than Nelly, Robinson fell in love with her and persuaded her to marry him. They had two children, Geoffrey and Gladys. He invested in a boys' school that Nelly helped him run. She was active in local charities, and performed in fund-raising theatricals. She lied about her age, telling people her family had known Dickens when she was a child; Georgina once came down to award school prizes. But during this period Nelly also confided to the Reverend William Benham, the local vicar, that she had been Dickens' mistress and that "she had come to feel remorse about her relations with him during his lifetime, and that her remorse had made them both miserable; and that she now 'loathed the very thought of this intimacy.'" In 1897, Benham passed these secrets on to the biographer Thomas Wright, but Wright didn't publish them until the nineteen-thirties. (Although some of Dickens' biographers dismiss Wright, Ms. Tomalin points out that after his death a number of details in his assertions were verified by scholars.)

Nelly's husband had a nervous breakdown in 1886, and sold the school at

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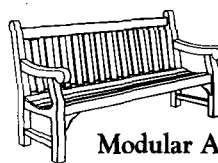
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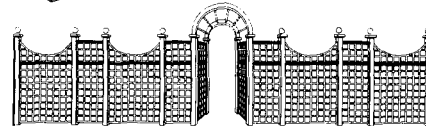


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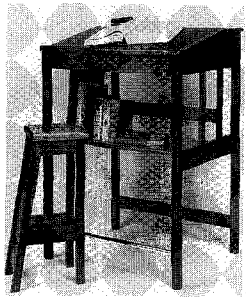
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a loss. The Robinsons struggled on, teaching and coaching; at one point, they invested in a market garden that failed. All the Ternan family papers came to Nelly, since her sisters were childless. She died, a widow, in 1914. Geoffrey went to war, and didn't examine his inheritance until 1920. His discoveries shocked him. He learned that his mother was ten years' older than she had claimed, and that Nelly and his aunts, whom he adored, had all been actresses. Another discovery led him to Henry, Dickens' only surviving son. After their interview, Geoffrey refused to discuss his mother with anyone, and destroyed the papers he had inherited, including, Ms. Tomalin notes with regret, a cache of Trollope documents.

Ms. Tomalin's tone is just right. She never whines, pleads, or harps, and rarely argues. She does take issue with Edmund Wilson's hostile characterization of Nelly, in his essay "Dickens: The Two Scrooges" (it's collected in "The Wound and the Bow") and again in his foreword to Ada Nisbet's 1952 monograph "Dickens and Ellen Ternan." Wilson called Nelly mercenary and commonplace, but his judgment isn't based on specific evidence: it's a by-product of his effort to rescue Dickens' work from the same kind of uncomprehending admiration his personality evoked. Emphasizing the "dark"—the tragic—elements in Dickens' fiction, Wilson ascribed such antiheroines as Estella in "Great Expectations" to Dickens' disappointment with Nelly. Edgar Johnson's two-volume biography of 1952 echoes Wilson. Peter Ackroyd, Dickens' most recent biographer, doesn't disparage Nelly, but follows Katharine Longley in maintaining that the Ternan-Dickens intimacy wasn't sexual. Ms. Tomalin dedicates her book to Miss Longley, who has been generous in sharing her unpublished work, but thanks her only to disagree with her. Ms. Tomalin sees to it that these scholarly disputes don't weary the reader, and she never claims to know more than we can know. I think she's correct in refusing to deduce Dickens' writings from his life. Genius surprises: You couldn't predict Beethoven's "Diabelli" variations from the banal waltz he started with. Dickens' situation from 1857 on—that of a rich older man in love with a poor, pretty young woman—is

as trite as the Diabelli tune, and I suspect that if it appears in his work his imagination has transformed it beyond our recognition.

The rigor with which Nelly and her sisters suppressed their theatrical pasts and lived out a lie suggests the pathetic fierceness of their girlhood longing for respectability. But they may also have felt pride in themselves and their family, for they kept their clippings. And Nelly didn't burn the evidence. She held on to it throughout her marriage and through all her moves from house to house—in her later years, to ever smaller quarters. Ms. Tomalin notes that Nelly saved a printed copy of Dickens' will, which opens with a bequest to her of a thousand pounds, and is the closest he came to making a public acknowledgment of their relationship. (He seems to have had intermittent impulses to make such an acknowledgment in his lifetime, but his friends always talked him out of it, for fear not only of his losing his audiences but also of wrecking Nelly's reputation.) I wonder if Nelly preserved the evidence in the hope that Geoffrey—and future generations—would understand.

Nowadays, no doubt, Nelly would have eased her impoverished old age by selling or publishing Dickens' letters. But nowadays we can't read her life story without seeing feminist implications that Nelly didn't: in 1911, she joined the Anti-Suffrage League. Even as we appreciate our distance from Nelly, Ms. Tomalin never allows her to become remote. So this biography reads like a good novel: it feels as if it's not just about strangers; somehow, it's also about us and people we know.

—NAOMI BLIVEN

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

FLYING HERO CLASS, by Thomas Keneally (Warner; \$19.95). Frank McCloud, a white Australian, is a would-be writer and the manager of the aboriginal Barramatjara Dance Troupe, which is making its first world tour. While the Barramatjara are mesmerizing audiences at Lincoln Center with their dream paintings and their haunting, animistic dances, McCloud is drinking too much, flirting in front of his wife, and generating insufficient enthusi-

asm for his first novel among New York publishers. When the tour's flight to Frankfurt is hijacked by Arab terrorists and McCloud finds himself chosen for possible execution as an Exploiter of Landless People, he is predictably unprepared for his hour of reckoning. This ambitious book is as much meditation as thriller—an invitation to grapple with the world's competing hierarchies of injustice while one has the luxury to do so. But Mr. Keneally's ironies have an anesthetizing effect; when McCloud finally decides what he must do to save himself, physically and spiritually, the reader feels curiously distanced from his transformation. What remains after the author's deliberately deflated conclusion is a sad, unfocused sense of narrow visions and misguided faith.

GENERAL

DEAD CERTAINTIES (UNWARRANTED SPECULATIONS), by Simon Schama (Knopf; \$21). In this compelling demonstration and discussion of historical imagination, Mr. Schama, the author of "Citizens" and "The Embarrassment of Riches," starts out by recalling the battle on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 that won Canada for Great Britain and cost the life of the British general James Wolfe. He makes vivid our sense of what it was like with an account by an imaginary British soldier, and describes how a reconstruction of the battle, Benjamin West's famous painting "The Death of General Wolfe," fixed the world's vision of an ennobling tragedy that may in fact have looked quite different. Mr. Schama then moves on to the Boston of Francis Parkman, Jr., the nineteenth-century historian, who wrote "Montcalm and Wolfe," and whose uncle George Parkman disappeared one day in 1849—murdered, a jury found, by a Harvard professor named John White Webster. In exploring the case, Mr. Schama again relies on imagination to supply the motives of the janitor who found the remains of a corpse hidden in Webster's laboratory, and who testified at the trial.

THE EDGE OF PARADISE: AMERICA IN MICRONESIA, by P. F. Kluge (Random House; \$21.95). The author, a

teacher at Kenyon College, joined the Peace Corps in 1967 and, working on Saipan, made friends with another bright, energetic, idealistic young man, Lazarus Salii, who eventually entered politics and was elected President of Palau. Unexpectedly, in 1988, Salii committed suicide, and this book records Kluge's journey to Micronesia to learn why. His Peace Corps job and subsequent visits had taken him all over Micronesia—three Pacific Island groups, the Marianas, the Marshalls, and the Carolines, that became American trusteeships after the Second World War—and his narrative retraces those earlier journeys, comparing past and present in a beautifully written work that combines memoir, travelogue, history, anthropology, and political reporting in a remarkably affecting and effective style.

CATAPULT: HARRY AND I BUILD A SIEGE WEAPON, by Jim Paul (Villard; \$18). The author, a poet, craves a catapult; his artist friend Harry helps him realize his dream; and with the result they shoot grapefruit-size rocks a few hundred feet in the air. In this sometimes plain, sometimes inspired book, Mr. Paul tells his and Harry's story from first vision to final fine-tuning; along the way he also explores a few dozen pockets of military history, from the Hittites to the atom bomb. The book is meant to capture the Dr. Strangelovesque appeal of creative war-making, but too often it bogs down in detail, and sounds like a textbook. Fortunately, Mr. Paul can laugh at himself, and he is genuinely moving when he recounts the horrifically mismatched battles that new military technology causes.

NOTE: "The Last Italian: Portrait of a People," by William Murray, has been published by Prentice Hall (\$21.95). Some of the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

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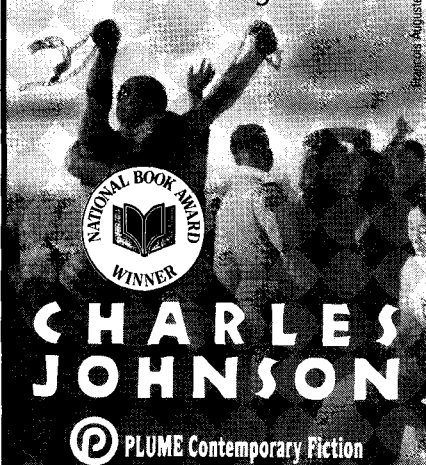
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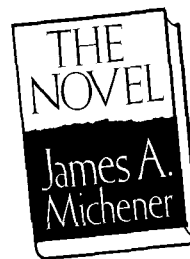
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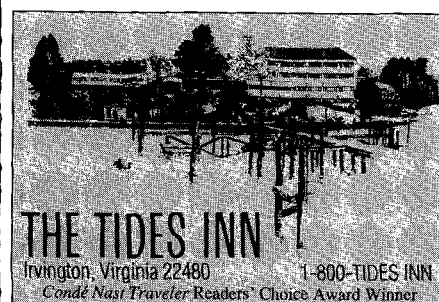
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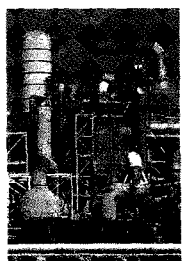


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